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STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXXV. No. 880. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 1948 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE BLIND SIDE OF THE HEART

THE January clearance sales have provided our distinguished contemporary, the *Economist*, with a text on which to base a favourite homily: crying, in effect, "Ricardo Rides Again!", it asserts that the bargains which drew milling crowds demonstrated the re-emergence of "the sovereignty of the consumer" and the efficiency of that "battered and neglected instrument . . . the price system." Alas for these unrepentent admirers of the beauties of classical economics, it has to be recorded that the "appeasement" of consumers in the January sales was the resultant of several factors, none of which has much bearing on the virtues of a free market. In particular, the rush of buying was concentrated mainly on goods whose coupon-value was drastically reduced—a phenomenon which reflects not so much the sovereignty of the consumers' purse as the depletion of rationed clothing books. That consumers' resistance is occasionally visible even in these times of dearth, we do not dispute; nor do we deny that occasionally, and within narrow limits, it may be effective. For example, in a well-known chain of provision stores the public's reluctance to buy game at astronomically inflated cost has brought down the price of a cock pheasant in the past three months from 28s. to £1. Against this modest vindication of consumers' sovereignty must be set the fact that, despite an admittedly slow turn-over, the prices of "unpointed" delicacies show little response to the absence of effective mass demand; and, during the past fortnight, piles of unsold citrus fruit, priced at 8d. per lb., form a quaint commentary on the claim that the price mechanism can be trusted to "do its job."

It is not only, however, in relation to retail prices that the customer is no longer "always right." The omnipotence which the consumer exercised, and which he not infrequently abused, under a system of *laisser-faire* tends inevitably to be diminished as the State, acting through corporations, public boards and other functional agencies, replaces private enterprise. Not, of course, that the consumers' sovereignty had been wholly maintained during the evolution of capitalism from its first, competitive beginnings into its final monopolistic form, with its protective system of cartels, price rings and market agreements. Nevertheless, it would be dishonest for Socialists to pretend that, as the nationalised sector of industry and trade expands and, above all, as the authority of "the planner" increases, there is no danger of the consumer being faced with rigidities which he cannot overcome. The plan must be made to work; this or that publicly controlled industry must concentrate on balancing its budget; this or that service must give priority to the well-being of its employees. Consumer and user are thus apt to be regarded as passive recipients of the end-product: their desires are secondary to the means elaborated for their supposed satisfaction.

We do not mean to imply that, in his capacity of consumer, the citizen is either voiceless or unheard. If he has occasion for dissatisfaction at local shortages of food or the quality of some manufactured article he has bought, he can add his contribution to the voluminous letter-bag which daily reaches the portals of the Ministry of Food and the Board of Trade. If he feels reason to complain that his coal is deficient in thermal value, or that the existing rail service grossly overlooks the needs of his township, he can rely on the willing readiness of his M.P. to break a lance on his behalf. But though Departments, to our knowledge, pay constant and earnest attention to public protests, and the Parliamentary Question is a cogent spur to the thorough-going inquest, it is inevitable that the public relations divisions of Ministries should tend to view their role as defensive: they have to justify, they have to placate, and their technique is apt to be that of adroit apologia. Moreover, though the consumer is afforded scope for what may be termed sectional criticism of the state of affairs with which he is confronted, he is given singularly little say in the determination of future planning or in the assessment of his needs as a whole. If he dislikes dried eggs, he may acquaint Mr. Strachey with his allergy. If he tires of strap-hanging, he may bombard Mr. Barnes with his protests. But does he want more food at the expense of less amenities? Does he really insist on present satisfactions at the cost of forfeiting the future rewards, say, of capital development? Except possibly (but by no means certainly) at general elections, nobody asks him; his answer is unknown.

Here, for a Socialist Government, lies the risk of "the blind side of the heart." We are all of us consumers as well as producers, and the objective of good government is the satisfaction and happiness of the governed—not merely the efficiency of the mechanism. We are glad to note that the Co-operative Movement is urging that the consumer should be represented more strongly in the State. The Co-operators appear to be thinking on the lines of a consultative organisation whose views should be sought, just as the Government now seeks the views of the Trades Union Congress in issues affecting wages and employment. We should go farther. What is needed is that one senior Cabinet Minister should be charged with the task of thinking continuously of the satisfaction and psychology of the consumer. For this purpose the obvious choice is the Lord President of the Council. With the task of economic planning now removed from his shoulders, he is left with responsibility for the co-ordination of scientific research and for the work of the Central Office of Information. We should like to see the establishment, under his aegis, of a small staff concerned specifically with "consumer research." As distinct from the public relations divisions of individual Ministries, this branch of the Lord President's Department should regard itself as the champion, not of the planner or the public board or of the producer, but of the consumer and user, as such. If he were consistently well briefed as to the consumer's real preferences, resistances and probable reactions to future development, the Lord President could frequently give the Cabinet, with the authority of his senior position, timely advice which would save the planners from mistakes due to forgetting that the ultimate units in any plan are human

Britain, France and the Plan

The discussions in London between M. Alphand of the Quai d'Orsay and Mr. Bevin's officials are designed, it seems, to pave the way for a fresh meeting of the European Economic Conference. The U.S. Administration seemingly doubts the wisdom of such a move until Congress has voted; but the most deadly weapon in the hands of Congressional opponents of E.R.P. would be the argument that the Sixteen Nations were passively awaiting the flow of dollars and were doing nothing to make good the Paris promises of mutual co-operation and concerted plans for reconstruction. Other issues presumably arose in the talks. The French have not concealed their pained surprise that they should not have been consulted over the steps taken to establish in Frankfurt an Ersatz German Government of Bizonia. Their criticism of the form of the proposed political structure is that there is a dangerous acceptance of the principle of centralisation. We should have thought that the autonomous rights of the *Länder* were amply, perhaps excessively, preserved in the creation of the second Chamber, which is to have veto rights over the "Parliament" represented by the enlarged Economic Council. In addition, however, to the question whether France is prepared, under existing conditions, to become a partner in Trizonia, M. Alphand may well have been anxious to ascertain what the British attitude would be towards various conditions which have been, or may be, attached to dollar relief. Outstanding in this connection is the problem of the blocked funds which are to be amassed by recipient States to cover, in local currency, the full value of the non-repayable aid received. In relation to Interim Aid the U.S. Government stipulated that these funds should be used exclusively for the retirement of debt or currency by the State. When it comes to the long-term programme, it seems questionable whether the enormous funds involved could be earmarked exclusively and without time limit, for this purely deflationary purpose. If, on the other hand, their expenditure on capital development had to receive the approval of the American administrators, this would be regarded in many countries as an intolerable invasion of national sovereignty. The dilemma is awkward.

Mr. Truman's Budget Message

In his Budget message to Congress the President has given the American people a sharp reminder that the cost to the taxpayer of financing "the American Century" is high. Out of a total expenditure of $39.7 billions, no less than $11 billions are required for the Armed Forces and $4 billions for the Marshall Plan; and, if Congress acts on the recommendations of the President's Air Policy Commission, which calls for an immense expansion of the Air Force since "the United States has no choice but to pursue policies which may lead to friction with other nations," the cost of armaments will rise higher still. The message puts the Republicans "on the spot." Determined, as they are, to reduce taxes in election year, they cannot allow the Democrats to pose as the sole champions of a "strong" America. Still less can they insist on economies at the expense of the Veterans or the holders of the National Debt. There may, in consequence, be greater temptation to make E.R.P. the victim of economy cuts.

Kashmir Before Uno

It will be a tragedy if the Security Council adopts, over the Kashmir dispute, the slow-moving procedure that has been customary in other matters. All the aspects of the case demand urgent action and, until a settlement has been reached, the only prospect ahead of the Kashmiris is one of abject misery, coupled with an increasing deterioration of their economy that will take many years to right. It would be a sad mistake, for instance, for the Security Council to take the easy way out and gain time by despatching a fact-finding Commission. Such a Commission could not make a report for many weeks and, when it did, the report would not contain fresh material of sufficient value to aid a solution. Nor should the Council allow itself to become bogged down in endless discussion which attempts to apportion the blame for events in Kashmir. Its aim must be to concentrate on constructive proposals for removing the present deadlock and tackling its causes. Here it starts with a considerable advantage. Neither India nor Pakistan is involved in any sense with the world Power groups. Both are anxious to believe in, and support, Uno. At the same time, failure to resolve the dispute will result in irreparable loss of prestige to Uno in the new Asia. But if the Security Council can evolve a sensible working compromise, there is no doubt that both Dominions will be glad to accept it. They would then be relieved of the danger of being accused of weakness by their countrymen which might arise from any purely voluntary initiative to end the conflict. The task of the British delegation at Uno is a peculiarly delicate one. Obviously, it would be useless for the British to come down in favour of either Dominion, and probably the less they say publicly the better. On the other hand, they can do much good by privately urging on both parties a calm and dispassionate analysis of the situation and the avoidance of statements tending towards a permanent breach. If the British can persuade India and Pakistan that continuing discord in Kashmir is equally harmful to both, and that the defence of the North-West Frontier must be a joint responsibility, the battle will have been won.

Breakers Ahead

The cold douche which Sir Stafford Cripps poured out at his press conference last week was not a degree too cold to fit the facts. Dollars are still disappearing at a rate which will make large further cuts in basically necessary supplies quite unavoidable during the next few months unless U.S. aid arrives on a really big scale—and perhaps even if it does. The Canadian agreement will have to be renewed in a couple of months—nobody knows on what terms; for the Canadian need for U.S. dollars is as great as ours. The overseas market for exports is beginning to sag seriously: Sir Stafford appeals for energetic measures to cut British costs in order to hold it, and expresses concern at rising wage-trends. Certainly auguries are bad for the expansion of export trade, even if prices can be somewhat reduced; for buyers' purchasing power is declining in a good many countries, wherever foreign currency is involved, and we already know the difficulties in the way of larger sales in the dollar areas. Even if exports rise—and they may even fall—there is clearly not the smallest prospect of bridging for a long time to come the gap, which still involves a dollar drain of $45 millions a week. Sir Stafford went on to say that "Great Britain must not count on aid under the Marshall Plan"; but, unless he is counting on it to a quite considerable extent, we do not see how he expects to get through. He did say that without Marshall aid "we could not play our part in European recovery and therefore in the recovery of the world as a whole"; but the situation is, in fact, much more serious than this. If Great Britain were, in Sir Stafford's words, "driven back upon a policy of immediate self-preservation," it is, to say the least, not at all evident what this policy could be. In the long run, we may be able to build up great sources of supply outside the dollar area, especially in Africa. That, however, will take a good many years—and meantime, what? In the early future, we cannot rely on supplies from Eastern Europe replacing wholly those from the Western hemisphere. Hence more austerity, and indeed something for which "austerity" will be altogether too weak a word. It is well that the public should realise that there are breakers ahead.

The Housing Outlook

Houses are now being finished at a good pace; but in accordance with the plan for economising in both timber and man-power, few houses are due to be started, except in rural and mining areas. By April a part of the force now engaged on housing will begin to become "redundant"—mainly civil engineering workers at first, but quite soon skilled building craftsmen as well. This surplus labour will appear mainly in the towns; and the question is what the Government is planning to do with it. Unskilled workers in civil engineering and house building are fairly easily transferable to other heavy jobs, but certainly not to textiles or, for the most part, to the other undermanned light industries. Skilled building craftsmen are not transferable at all, except to other types of building; and these other types also are being cut down. Of course, most of the "redundant" workers would have no difficulty in finding jobs if they were allowed to shift over to the large mass of repair work that is still waiting to be done. But that would use up scarce materials, from the black market if not from authorised sources; and it would not fit in with the Government's ideas about the extent to which the capital programme is to be cut down—for presumably even having one's roof repaired counts as capital work. It looks as if the Government will have to let up a bit on the restrictions in repairs, unless it is prepared to go ahead rather faster with new houses. Perhaps what Mr. Bevan is waiting for is unemployment among builders on a sufficient scale to strengthen his hand in asking for a higher housing programme for 1948-9. Unfortunately, the scale of housing depends on the balance of payments.

Tourists and Caterers

The hotels are in full cry. They have to meet in the near future the requirements of minimum wages and conditions under the Catering Wages Act, which many of the hotel proprietors cordially dislike. They claim, as an "invisible export" industry, to be receiving much less than their due consideration; for how are they to cater effectively for foreign tourists if the tourists are expected to be austere, above all in not motoring about the country? How indeed, they ask, are the tourists expected to get to them, especially when they are located to deal with road traffic, and are not in towns? They want, too, more decoration, more linen, more furniture, more crockery—and larger and not smaller staffs; and they are afraid that the Government means to entice their workers away to occupations regarded as more essential. It is indeed a sad story—the sadder because not a great deal can be done about it. The sections of the motoring public that have behaved well over the loss of basic petrol (they are not too numerous) would be driven into revolt if any foreigner were to be allowed as much petrol as he liked for gallivanting about the country—even if he were paying for it in dollars. All that can be done—and in our view should be done—is to make reciprocal arrangements with some of our Continental neighbours for easing up on tourist restrictions, without granting any special privileges or—still less—making any political distinctions. This may leave hotels grumbling that they cannot be expected to make bricks without straw. But in fact the making of bricks with very little straw is the industry at which we may have to work hardest this year.

Unshown Films

Mr. Wyatt's statement last week that if you live in St. Albans you will never see "A Man About the House" locally has produced a number of letters from naturally indignant residents. It appears that the film was shown at a privately owned cinema in St. Albans at the end of November. This does not invalidate Mr. Wyatt's main point that the film would not be shown in a St. Albans cinema owned by one of the big circuits.

PALESTINE POKER

THE British public seems to have persuaded itself that it is possible to cut our losses in Palestine and to turn our backs on the country. This, of course, is a delusion. Though we are ending the Mandate and withdrawing our troops, Britain remains vitally interested in the fate of Palestine, and the fact that the Uno Commission takes over on May 15th makes no difference to this. So long as we remain dependent on Middle Eastern oil, we cannot disregard a danger spot from which chaos might spread through all the Arab States.

The Government sometimes gives the impression that it shares the public delusion about Palestine, and that it is concerning itself almost exclusively with the detailed plans for withdrawal. "*Après-moi*," Mr. Bevin seems to say. "*après-moi le pogrom.*" But this is not the true picture. British diplomacy in the Middle East is as active as ever, and the "neutrality" which we are so ostentatiously displaying is not an end in itself, but a sleight-of-hand in a game of poker. In order to convince the Americans that we were in earnest in our determination to wind up the Mandate, Britain evinced no interest whatever in the future of the country. If we hoped by this manœuvre to pull the Americans off the sidelines, we have been disappointed. Having supported partition in theory, Mr. Marshall has refused to lift a finger to assist in its implementation; and it was that refusal more than any other factor which encouraged the Mufti to stage the three days of Arab looting and murder which provoked the present disorders in Palestine. The Mufti and the Arab Higher Committee are confident—overconfident perhaps in a year of Presidential election—that they have got the Americans where they want them, talking Zionism at home and practising in Palestine a non-intervention which works against the Jews.

It is probable that Mr. Bevin and Mr. Molotov have both calculated on this American attitude. Russia's hope in Palestine is doubtless trouble without effort. This might either lead to an anti-Western flare-up throughout the whole Middle East, or alternatively enable the U.S.S.R. to intervene with the Red Army in order to enforce the authority of the United Nations. For this objective, a British withdrawal which coincides with the arrival of an impotent and defenceless Five-man Commission is ideal. Partition, without force to impose it, can be reckoned on to produce chaos in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Bevin, however, may be calculating one move ahead of the Russians. Just because the chaos which is due to develop after May 15th will provide golden opportunities for Communist trouble-makers, he knows that most of the Arab States will be anxious to damp it down. They are terrified of Moscow, particularly in view of its success in capturing the embryonic trade union movement throughout the Middle East. By playing up the Russian menace to the full, it might therefore be possible to bring the Arab League to its senses and to negotiate a last-minute settlement which would prevent Russian intervention. The foundations for this hope are the known lukewarmness of the Egyptians, who care more for the Sudan than for the Arabs of Palestine; the anxiety of the Christians in Lebanon to avoid a conflict which may jeopardise their independence; the ambitions of King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan to acquire part at least of the Arab area of Palestine for his kingdom; the uncertainties in Saudi-Arabia, where the death of the aged Ibn Saud will certainly create a dynastic crisis; and the internal weakness of Iraq, whose Government can scarcely risk much of its army on a foreign venture. Of all the Arab States, only Syria seems likely to back the Mufti's Jehad with real enthusiasm. The rest of the League would not need much persuasion to accept a settlement, designed to prick the Palestine blister, before the Russian doctors proffer their services in dealing with it.

Our Middle-East experts have grounds for assuming that in the State Department, and even more in the Five-man Commission which is now preparing in New York for its perilous pilgrimage, the threat of chaos after the British withdrawal may also induce a mood of appeasement. The frontiers of the two States to be created by partition were hurriedly settled in last-minute conferences, and are open to serious objections. It is doubtful whether the Jews have the manpower, and it is certain that at the moment they have not the equipment, to hold them for very long without the assistance of an international police force. Though it is just possible that the Security Council may sanction a token force, any proposal which gave a loophole for the Red Army to intervene would almost certainly be vetoed. A police force, therefore, fit for serious military operations, is probably excluded. Jews and Arabs will have to police the areas which each is strong enough to hold down; and the State Department is aware that this is a polite way of saying that Jews and Arabs will fight a non-intervention war on the Spanish model, with the Jews in the position of the Republicans. In these circumstances, while the Russians may well support the letter of the partition proposal, the State Department might be persuaded to sacrifice both the letter and the spirit in order to prevent a conflagration which endangered the oil-wells. The stage, it is argued, would then be set for the establishment of the sort of unitary State originally envisaged in the Morrison version of the White Paper.

It would be idle at this late stage of the Palestine tragedy to argue the ethics of this sort of deal. What matters is its practicability; and on this score there are three things to be said. In the first place, such a policy disregards the role of the Mufti. Whatever Arab Prime Ministers may feel about the Russian menace, the Mufti will not be affected by this argument. Moscow is for him as useful an ally as Berlin. Since he dominates the Higher Committee, and exerts a blackmail on the Arab League, he can only be defeated by military force. In the second place, the Jews of Palestine cannot be persuaded, after the Uno decision, to accept any variant of the Morrison Plan. However desperate their position may appear to an outsider, they will choose war rather than capitulation. Lastly, it must not be forgotten that the American Presidential elections occur next November. No American President, whatever the strategic interests involved, will dare openly to connive at the setting aside of the partition decision and the forcible subjection of the Jews as a minority within an Arab State. For all these reasons, hopes of a last-minute settlement along the lines of the Morrison Plan are purely illusory.

What then remains? It is certain that the Jews, having won their case in Uno, will fight rather than give way. But their armouries have been seriously depleted during the cold war with the British. They possess no heavy equipment and are unable to buy arms from either Britain or America. The Arabs, on the other hand, have been steadily increasing their armaments, and the remarkable decision to use the Arab Legion as part of a frontier force whose function it is to prevent arms smuggling, will do little to hinder them. The Jews are therefore bound to demand of the Security Council the right to equip their army; and the claim can hardly be denied.

The second weapon which the Jews possess is a diplomatic one. They, too, can exploit the fear of Russian intervention, and so bring pressure on the British and Americans, and through them on the Arab League. What we may well see, therefore, during the next three months is the battle of wills, which has proceeded ever since Mr. Bevin took charge of the Jewish problem, transferred on to another plane. This time the stakes are even higher. The Jews, who have nothing to gain by submission, will be determined to call the British and American bluff. Unlike the Arab League, they will not be unduly alarmed by the threat of Russian intervention, which might be of direct assistance to them. Therein lies a diplomatic strength which to some degree compensates for their military weakness.

If the Government really desires, as it must, to prevent a conflagration in the Middle East, it would do well to ponder carefully the real balance of forces, and not to be misled once again by those Arab experts who have under-estimated so often in the past the strength and the will-power of the Jews. It is Mr. Bevin's duty to work for an agreed settlement before May 15th, and he will be wise to reckon in advance that that settlement must involve the liquidation of the Mufti and the establishment of a Jewish State, though the boundaries of that State may well be a subject for negotiation. We must use all the great influence which we still possess to persuade the Arab League that, if it wants to avoid Russian intervention, it must induce the Arabs of Palestine to accept the Uno decision.

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM FOR EUROPE

SOCIALISM, if it is to have meaning in the world of to-day, in which international problems are the key problems, and no country—not even the greatest—can hope to shape its destiny alone, must mean something internationally as well as on the national plane. Communism does so: that is one reason why it makes so effective an appeal, even when it is acting least sensibly. It stands for world revolution, leading everywhere sooner or later to the totalitarian proletarian state. Democratic Socialism professes to stand for something different—for the establishment of Socialism by stages and on the basis of the widest possible consent, with freedom of speech and organisation, and with a State developed (as far as the conditions in each country allow) out of the existing State, and not set up anew on the basis of the dictatorship of any class. Communism has clearly the advantage over democratic Socialism that its theory can be applied anywhere, to the most advanced societies and to the most primitive—or nearly so. Paradoxically, indeed, it can be applied least easily to the most advanced—which is not at all what Marx expected. Democratic Socialism is much less universal in its appeal because it is hardly possible to imagine a democratic Socialist society being established except in a country which has already absorbed in some degree the liberal qualities of toleration and government based on a wide measure of consent. In other words, it is primarily a doctrine applicable to countries in which civilisation has penetrated to sufficient strata of the people to furnish a basis for democratic government of the Western type.

In the world to-day this civilised and civilising conception of Socialism is fighting for its very life. It is caught between the two fires of an unexhausted individualist capitalism, still dominant in the United States, and a triumphantly emergent Communism, which has at least shown its power to make and to sustain social revolution among peoples who have never passed through the experience of liberal capitalism. Elsewhere, Communism has only shown its power to act as a profoundly disturbing factor, and to split the working-class movement without winning the day. This is not to say that it cannot win in the West, but only that it looks more likely for the present to wreck both democratic Socialism and itself; and that, if it did win, Western standards of living, as well as human relations, would probably have been destroyed before rebuilding among the ruins could begin.

This may have to happen; but Western Socialists can hardly be expected to acquiesce in it, unless, indeed, they have given up hope that their own way of life may prevail. If it is not to

happen, it must be stopped from happening by positive action to build up a democratic Socialist society in such countries as are ready to accept it, and have the means to make it work. How long capitalist society can endure in the United States I do not pretend to know; but it looks good for some time yet. What cannot be done, however ready Americans may be to think it can, is the rebuilding of West European society on a capitalist basis that will be self-supporting—in the sense of being able to make or to pay for all the necessaries of a good standard of life. Capitalism is still workable on the basis of America's resources, but not of Europe's. The attempt to make it work in Western Europe could only mean forcing down European standards of living and driving the European workers to Communism as a resort of desperation. That is what is bound to happen if West European capitalist societies, unable to live "on their own," try to live as pensioners of America—until the American people get tired of supporting them and cut them off suddenly with a dollar as a parting gift.

Why cannot West European capitalism be rebuilt? In the final resort, because it has built up an economic order dependent on world conditions which no longer exist. It was built on the assumption of large backward areas to be supplied with expensive manufactures in exchange for cheap food. Its high industrialisation and the density of its urban population, the wealth of its bourgeoisie and the relatively high living standards of its workers, all depend on this. But to-day the epoch of cheap food and dear manufactures is over. There are still plenty of markets for high-class manufactured goods, but the world's food producers are strong enough to resist selling their food cheap in exchange for them. The answer, of course, is to bring down the relative prices of industrial goods, but this is precisely what European capitalism, riddled with monopoly and incapable of planning across national frontiers except for the purpose of keeping prices high, is quite incapable of doing. It is impracticable to plan for really cheap production under modern conditions except on the foundation of a home market much larger than single European States can command. The need is for unified planning, over the widest possible supra-national area, both of production and of exchanges between the combined industrial area and the countries which are mainly primary producers. Exchanges, I mean, on fair terms, not at monopoly scarcity prices; and production planned in concert to meet the essential needs of the mass of consumers at home as well as of export.

To aim at this is the democratic Socialist policy that Western Europe needs; and the time to begin upon it is now. It is all very well to discuss the possibilities of a West European Customs Union; but it should be clear enough to anyone who takes the trouble to think that no such Union is practicable except on a foundation of common planning of production. Countries are not going to throw down their tariff walls against one another unless they are assured that they will be able to maintain full employment at home, through their share in an internationally organised production plan, assigning to them a sufficient range of activity within which they will be able to specialise and get their costs down to a reasonable level, while obtaining cheap goods from their neighbours specialising in complementary products. This does not imply building up Western Europe into a region producing all it needs; on the contrary, the purpose is to enable Western Europe to conduct a thriving trade with the rest of the world by getting its costs down.

This trade, as well as the planning of production, will have to be organised trade. It will be disastrous if the "Marshall Aid" countries bid one against another in the world market for scarce supplies. They will have to organise their buying on a common basis and, to a considerable extent, use the method of long-term contracts in order to elicit the requisite supplies at fair, non-speculative prices. In order to do this, they will have also to organise collective sales, especially in the form of trade agreements, on the lines of the latest Anglo-Soviet deal, whereby in effect products are directly swopped for other products, at agreed prices and with agreed delivery dates. All this requires international agencies of a kind which war has made familiar between allies. It implies a Western European planning staff, including a combined planning agency for the difficult factor, transport.

This is practicable West European union; and it is also, by whatever names it may be called, the practical approach to democratic Socialism on a supra-national basis. It is, however, not a programme for which support can be secured only from Socialists. If it were, however desirable it might be, there would be no prospect of making an immediate start upon it over a sufficient area. It is a policy that can appeal to the whole of the "Third Force" in Western Europe, and can be used to rally that Force from the retreat to which it has been driven for want of a common constructive programme.

It is, however, particularly a matter over which the Socialists, trade unionists and co-operators of Western Europe, as well as governments, ought to get together. In all four cases, the initiative rests largely in British hands. If only Mr. Bevin and Sir Stafford Cripps could get together on this, and if only Mr. Bevin would make a forthright pronouncement on these lines, a start would be given. The Trades Union Congress, and the Co-operative Union, as well as the Labour Party, could open up talks with their opposite numbers on the Continent. The Labour Party has at length decided to act in this way; but why on earth is the proposed meeting not to take place till March? What needs doing needs doing quickly, both at the official and the unofficial level. The countries concerned in the Marshall Plan could meet to concert their measures for dealing not only with the handling of American aid, but also with the working out of a common trading policy with Eastern Europe, with the Dominion and Colonial areas, and with other primary-producing countries, and to make at least a beginning on the common plan of production. Such initiatives would both tend to strengthen Europe's hands in dealing with America, and help to rally democratic opinion behind the "Third Force," which would for the first time appear, not as a mere "betwixt and between," but as a constructive alternative to American or Soviet domination. Heart would be put back into the democrats of Germany as well as of France and other Western countries, and the British recovery plan, instead of representing a doubtful hope, would begin to look really feasible. Will Mr. Bevin, will the Government, speak at last?

G. D. H. COLE

UNRATIONED SOVIET SHOPPING

(From our Moscow Correspondent.)

WHEN the Stalin-Zhdanov Decree on monetary reform and the abolition of rationing in the Soviet Union was published, the question which naturally arose in the minds of most foreign observers here was how far the aims of the Decree would in fact be attained. It was obvious that the "speculators" would be hard hit: the currency conversion would wipe out most of the gains of those who took advantage of wartime shortages and of the discrepancy between "rationed" and "free market" prices, and who hoarded large quantities of notes either for further speculative operations or for a rainy day. It was equally clear that what the Decree called "the last sacrifice" would also fall heavily on holders of State bonds. Except for the 1947 Loan, the nominal value of all bonds would be reduced by 70 or 80 per cent. (The argument for this drastic conversion was, of course, that most of the loans had been subscribed during the war in depreciated roubles; and it was significant that the worst conversion rate was given to holders of the negotiable 1938 Loan—the speculators' favourite.) Against these losses what gains would be set? Small depositors in the Savings Banks had their holdings converted at par, so that they stood to benefit if the new rouble had a greater purchasing power than the old; and, since there was to be no reduction in nominal wages, the effect of the Decree on workers depended equally on the future price level and the availability of goods. That question had still to be answered.

A month has now passed, and it is possible to frame a fair picture of the consequences of the Decree. It is already evident that it has brought considerable benefits to the productive worker, especially in urban areas. In Moscow, for a few days after de-rationing, there were inevitably some maladjustments in distribution: too many people were eager to buy goods now ration-free at former "ration" prices. Now, however, the shopping rush is over. Any family with a "typical" income of 1,500-2,000 roubles a month, and even the lowest paid worker, is much better off to-day than before de-rationing. Basic foods, like potatoes, at one rouble a kilogram, and bread at three roubles, now represent a small item in the family budget. Meat can be bought freely at 30 roubles a kilogram and fish at 12-20 roubles. Sugar, in comparison with earlier "free market" prices, is dirt cheap at 51 roubles.

That distribution is becoming rapidly and smoothly adjusted can be seen from the fact that the Co-operative shops, whose prices were at first about 50 per cent. higher than those of the State shops, have now brought down their prices to the State shop level for lack of customers. (They had an advantage only during the first few days when there was queueing, now ended, in the State shops.) The peasant markets, in turn, are having to conform more and more with State prices; and the profiteers who recently boasted of the high prices they were going to charge this winter for potatoes are now being mercilessly chaffed by housewives, to whom "free" potatoes are now gladly sold at only a fraction above the prices of the State shops.

One result of the reform is to encourage the "public sector" of the Kolkhoz—that is, the work done strictly for the collective farm's proper purposes—since the peasant is now paid for this work in cash with which he can buy freely in the towns any amount of goods which were either not available at all in the war years, or had to be paid for at high prices. Not only in Moscow, but in every small market town, there are now numerous Co-operative or State shops where the peasant to-day can buy manufactured goods in quantities spectacular compared with the bareness of the shops until quite recently. For example, there are reasonable stocks of cotton goods at 10 roubles a metre, woollen blankets at 50 roubles, knives and forks at 5 roubles each, and plentiful supplies of crockery and glass at a fraction of the old "commercial" prices.

All the indications are that the production drive in consumer goods will be maintained, and that the dis-inflation of the excess of currency—brought about by the abnormal conditions of war and aggravated by the uncontrollable quantity of Soviet money forged by the Germans in the Occupied Territories—will act successfully as a controlling factor in retail distribution. One foreign observer remarked some years ago: "A thousand Woolworth shops throughout the U.S.S.R. would make a great difference to life." The establishment of not one but many thousands of "Woolworths" and other shops is now becoming a reality. The general level of consumption may not be high yet, but prospects are that in a year or two it will compare favourably with that of most countries in Europe; and, in the absence of another catastrophic drought such as that of 1946 (which necessitated the postponement of de-rationing till now), there is every chance that food will become genuinely plentiful in Russia this year.

In the preamble to the Stalin-Zhdanov Decree there was a note of challenge.

> Monetary reforms are usual in all countries after a great war. However, the monetary reform in our

country radically differs from what happens in capitalist countries. In these, the liquidation of the consequences of the war and monetary reform are accompanied by a great increase in the price of consumer goods, *i.e.*, by a heavy drop in the real wages of workers and employees, a reduction in their numbers and an increase in unemployment. The main burden of the war and of monetary reform thus falls, in capitalist countries, on the workers. In the U.S.S.R. the liquidation of the consequences of the war and the monetary reform are not carried out at the expense of the people. We have no unemployment and shall have none. Wages are not reduced but, in fact, increased . . . in terms of purchasing power.

Many Russians, let me say, take the view that the moral effect abroad of the success of the monetary and rationing reform will be important. The Soviet Union, they argue, is the first country in Europe to wipe the slate clean of the financial tangle of the war. The productive worker is better off, the speculator and hoarder penalised. What could be fairer? As for the bond holders, "Well, is not our conversion much more honest than the system of progressive inflation, under which the 1,000 francs or £100 written on the bond becomes a mockery of its old self?"

This year's great economic reform is, in fact, Russia's answer, in part, to the Marshall Plan. If this "answer" continues to hold good—and there is little doubt that it will, though some ups and downs are always possible even in the most elaborately planned economies—proponents of anti-Communism, it is reckoned here, will have to do some hard thinking. Russia has succeeded in solving, relatively quickly after the war, two basic problems—food and consumer goods. Her third present problem, housing, will take longer to solve—not indeed in the villages, where it has already been largely overcome, but in the larger towns. It is symptomatic, however, of the mentality of Soviet citizens to-day that the old 1935-36 slogan, heard when prosperity was growing after years of economic difficulties—"Life will be easier, Life will be more cheerful"—has been revived, as part of a campaign to prove that any real Socialist economy can do very well without the Marshall Plan.

A LONDON DIARY

IT is really waste of time to go on writing letters to the press telling the Government that the ban on "basic" is unpopular, inconvenient and unfair. Cabinet Ministers know better than anyone that it has lost more votes and created more active members of the Tory Party than any other restriction. They are not likely to prolong it one day longer than necessary. Unfortunately, the figures of dollar savings, as a result of the ban, are substantial, and they reveal the problem which critics like Sir Arthur Salter have never squarely faced. The ban on "basic" saves not only the petrol distributed as "basic," but the enormous quantities of black market petrol with which motorists supplemented their ration. I see no chance of an early lifting of the ban unless some way can be found of preventing the "fiddling" in which hundreds of thousands of otherwise respectable citizens indulged before the ban. How did the black market operate? In country districts many farmers deposit all their E coupons with the local garage at the beginning of the month. Since these coupons are allocated generously, and the farmers' needs vary, the garage proprietor often has a large number over at the end of the month. They are not sent back to the Regional Office. Another source of black market petrol is the long-distance lorry. Before the ban on basic, there were garages on all the main long-distance haulage routes where black market petrol could be got at very little more than the official price, and coupons cost 2d. to a shilling each. A friend of mine who drives a lorry tells me that many of his colleagues, in return for a consideration, used to hand over twenty coupons to a garage and pay for twenty gallons but take only ten in the tank. The haulage companies which footed the bill for this leak into the black market were loath to intervene. Rationing of commercial firms has always been a formality. They get most of the petrol they ask for. But drivers are hard to come by and even harder to keep. So the companies were inclined to wink an eye at transactions which kept the men sweet. This sort of black market undoubtedly still goes on, but it has shrunk. Hundreds of thousands of cars are off the road, and drivers with E and S coupons have to be far more careful, since they no longer have the excuse, if questioned, that they are using their "little bit of basic." So not only are there fewer customers in the black market, but the customers are buying less. This is why the abolition of basic has resulted in large savings of commercial and business petrol as well.

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How can this be dealt with? One suggestion, put forward (I think) by Reg Paget, the Member for Northampton, is to colour commercial petrol red, as was done with army petrol during the war, and to have it distributed through a separate system of pumps. But the difficulty here is enforcement. A motorist is stopped, his petrol tested, and found to show the fatal tinge of pink. So far so good. But how are the police to prove that he acquired the petrol illegally? The motorist will say he took what the garage gave him; there "must have been a mistake." This sounds like a knock-out for the scheme, but it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise an answer. I am afraid that, until one is found, we may go on waiting for our "basic."

* * *

The mongrel usually gets the worst of both worlds, and I have always thought the position of Mohammed's coffin, suspended midway between earth and heaven, the most unenviable. The Government is having a taste of these difficulties with the fishing industry, which is inclined to be a fishy business. Its Socialist foot is now planted firmly on coal and it controls the industry and fixes the price of coal. But fish are still in the capitalist world and private ownership, and the world of capitalist fish has firmly refused to pay export prices for bunker coal used by trawlers. In country districts I find there is a good deal of jibbing of this kind among interested parties. I referred a week or so ago to the rural discontent about housing. The discontent is deep and bitter, and the Government should keep its ears to the ground; for there are serious dangers in the situation, which is exploitable and exploited. I attended a rural meeting of protest the other night, and interested parties persistently—either openly or more often by insinuation—put the blame for the absence of cottages and building on the Government, on Government departments, or on "controls." The councils in these rural areas are, of course, almost solidly Tory, and many Labour people suspect that there is some sabotage, conscious or unconscious, of the housing programme for political purposes. Here again the difficulty is that Nye Bevan has one foot in the Socialist Ministry in Whitehall and the other in a capitalist local Housing Authority. A gentle kick in the capitalist world occasionally is perhaps desirable.

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How many people realise, I wonder, what a shabby role the British Government is playing in its attitude to one of the few successful functional agencies the United Nations has set up? A year ago the General Assembly voted unanimously for the establishment of the International Children's Emergency Fund (U.N.I.C.E.F.), to provide supplementary food (mostly dried milk) and medical aid to nursing mothers and children of twelve countries in Europe—on both sides of the "Iron Curtain"—and of China. In thus carrying on one small part of Unrra's programme, the Fund was to receive whatever money was left over when Unrra's accounts were wound up. It was also to get contributions from Governments and from private donations. So far, Unrra has turned over 11 million dollars; the U.S. Government has contributed 15 million dollars; the Dominion Governments have given generously; and contributions have come from the Governments of France, Czechslovakia and Poland, notwithstanding their own economic difficulties. But the British Government has so far refused to make any contribution, on the curious argument (to quote Mr. Mayhew) that it is better for the "limited supply of goods and services . . . to be covered by voluntary contributions." Since the U.S. Government has undertaken to match (in the proportion of 57 : 43) all contributions from other Governments, *but not those provided individually*, and since France has undertaken to provide 6 per cent. of the aggregate American contribution, the British refusal to give, say, £1 million to the fund robs it also of six million dollars. Surely here is a simple issue of humanity in which a Socialist Government would be well advised to think again.

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Londoners who visit the Yugoslav Exhibition, on view for the next fortnight at the Academy Cinema, Oxford Street, will probably be surprised to discover the range of the new Yugoslavia's appetite for modern English literature. Among the authors whose work has been published in translation since 1945 are Virginia Woolf (*The Years*), Shaw (*Arms and the Man*), E. M. Forster, Priestley, Galsworthy, Somerset Maugham and Cronin. (For reasons which elude me, the first translated book which came off the liberated printing presses was *Tom Jones*.) Marshal Tito's partisan army marched with rifle in one hand, primer in the other; and, on the cultural side, one of the chief aims of the National Front has been to educate the adult illiterates, who numbered three million (20 per cent. of the population) in 1944. They have been taught to read and write at the rate of 500,000 a year; and in 1947 alone no fewer than 11,000 new libraries were opened in Yugoslavia—8,000 of them in villages. To feed the awakened hunger for reading-matter, the publishing industry has been enormously expanded, and last November, I am told, 210 titles, with a total print of 2,237,000 copies, were published, of which about a third were translations, mainly from English and Russian. (The only U.S. authors so far translated are Upton Sinclair, Jack London and, inevitably, Mark Twain). I hope the Exhibition (which contains not only modern books but rare examples of 16th-century printing and a lovely display of photographs and peasant handicrafts) will result in the vivid work of some of Yugoslavia's contemporary writers becoming known in England.

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I have often been puzzled by the enthusiasm of boys who sit by railway lines and stations, perhaps for a whole day, solemnly noting the number of each engine that passes. Of course, it is a cheap hobby, but—by vesting day—well organised. For a shilling you could buy an elaborate index for each line which listed the age, type and purpose of every locomotive. Not long ago I travelled from the North in a compartment full of boys off to schools. They were on their feet the whole way, leaning perilously from windows to catch a glimpse of a number, and shouting their particular triumphs down the corridors to some two hundred companions strung down the train. One boy told me he spent every evening and his week-ends at a station five miles from home, and had logged two-thirds of all the L.M.S. engines. Why did he do it? He couldn't say, but it was grand fun. The others agreed. All the way to London they were waiting for the big sheds at Chalk Farm. By that time they had the numbers of more than one hundred engines. After several fruitless attempts either to read or to reach the sausages in the restaurant car, I became resigned and joined in the game. The boys were delighted when I scored. So was I. But I shall never become a convert to this craze which claims, I believe, several Oxford dons among its devotees. Will it survive the "levelling" of railway nationalisation?

POLYCRITIC

RESPECTABILITY

When Britain started to sweep the seas
She took the ocean for her demesne,
She planted her prosperous Colonies,
A very respectable Virgin Queen,
And raided the Western Hemisphere
As a very respectable privateer.

When Britain started to take to trade
The world was eager to deal with her,
Britannia's fortune again was made
As a very respectable shopkeeper,
And then she profited even more
As a very respectable creditor.

Britannia in the Imperial role
Increased in splendour and waxed in girth,
Her island sceptre assumed control
Of a large proportion of all the earth,
And through the ages she made her mark
As a very respectable matriarch.

Whenever a cause of war was just
Britannia buckled her breastplate on,
She earned her Allies' respect and trust
As a very respectable Amazon,
And in times of peace achieved success
As a very respectable governess.

To-day Britannia, though still as great,
For freedom forfeited all her gain,
And much reduced from the former state
Of her long, pacific and glorious reign,
May have to toil, till the pound's at par,
As a very respectable working char.

Britannia now at the crossroads stands.
Shall she pinch and scrape on a widow's mite,
Or rank with other impoverished lands
As a very respectable satellite?
Shall she choose the hard or the easier route
As a very respectable prostitute?

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5 - for each of those printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

I for one would not feed my pet pig on any foodstuff from Russia, no matter how succulent the morsel might seem to be on the surface.—Letter in *Truth*. (R. Prentice.)

The woman's view was that some mothers went into prison to have their babies.

"Many mothers would not thank you if they were sent elsewhere for confinements. I have seldom seen finer children than some born in prison," said Mrs. E. G. Birley, a prison visitor.—*Daily Herald*. (G. T. F. Coates.)

He managed to prevent a son from being called "El Alamein" and found that the name "Ivan" chosen by another family had been picked from a greyhound racing book.—Clergyman reported in *News Chronicle*. (D. R. Mead.)

By coming to church we at least help to keep the place warm, and if we join heartily in singing as well as lift up our souls to God in praise and thanksgiving, we will be able to keep ourselves warm on the coldest day. If needs be bring a rug for use during the Sermon.—*Church Magazine, Coddington*. (Miss I. M. Scott.)

Quiet heroism is the theme of Sunday's programme in the Home Service series, *The Undefeated. Not Welsh*).—*Radio Times*. (R. G. Andrews.)

Referring to the woman's allegations, the judge said she alleged her husband came home drunk one morning at two o'clock. He had with him six pedlers, gatters and a cape belonging to a barmaid. Some time afterwards he went to the Dunvant Mission to preach on temperance.—*News of the World*. (A. J. Willis.)

TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

(By a Correspondent)

THE nationalisation of the railways, after being discussed on and off for over a century, was accomplished with little fuss on the vesting day. To some extent this was because the new scheme for transport covers all forms—railways, passenger road transport, long-distance road haulage, ports, canals, privately owned railway wagons and coastwise shipping—and, although the railways are the largest section, they are still only part of the immense project conceived by the Transport Act of 1947. Henceforth it is the future of public transport as a whole that matters and each part is subservient to the whole.

The case for nationalisation of public transport was very strong, in many respects unanswerable; but obviously nationalisation of itself will not accomplish anything. If the subsequent unification and co-ordination of transport which nationalisation is intended to achieve is badly handled, the result may be worse than transport was under private enterprise; even if it is handled only fairly well, the loss of incentive or stimulus which private ownership induced, may result in a net national loss. But if a good job is done, the prospects of improving efficiency and reducing the national cost are real, and Britain can thus improve a vital basic industry and incidentally lead the world in a solution of a problem which up to now has baffled all countries.

The new system starts with some handicaps. It is doubtful, for instance, whether sufficient thought, particularly of the practical kind, was given to the framework of organisation inserted in the Act, and the more recent criticism about the decision to introduce functional management also suggests that the time allowed for preparation of the scheme within the general framework was too short. Decisions on these most important matters can hardly be altered later on: the whole character of the organisation is set by them. It is only later, however, that the results show.

The venture requires three main things—leadership, creative thinking and technical ability; and, unless the organisation provides these and provides them in such a way that they can function effectively, it will get off to a bad start. So far, the main emphasis has been placed on technical ability; the idea appears to be that technical experts working together as a team will form the most suitable management (including leadership and creative thinking) for the work to be done. Consider the parallel of the army; could it be successfully commanded in this way? A Commander-in-Chief is not selected because he is a specialist, and his job cannot be placed in commission without inviting disaster. A highly complex commercial business, requiring immediate decisions from an effective head whose will carries throughout the organisation is in principle no different from an army.

The first task of the new transport organisation is to rationalise each of the parts with a careful eye on the second and ultimate step of co-ordinating them. By far the largest task is with the railways. The four big groups have to be unified, a new tradition has to be created, new standards have to be decided upon and laid down, overlapping has to be removed. There are three stages in this work. The first is to take time to examine and compare the practices of each of the railways. No person in Britain at present knows them all. To enable this to be done there must be a period of centralisation—no matter what the critics say. Trained people in the central administration must find out the facts, and then compare them. The more carefully this is done at this stage, the more successful will be the ultimate realisation. This is the sort of stage which should have been introduced before deciding on the form of the organisation.

The second stage is one of decisions and introduction of the new principles and methods, aiming all the time at reducing costs. And the third is the securing of results; it is at this stage that the process of centralisation should be reversed, though the resistance to this may be great, human nature being what it is. The greatest danger in any large-scale fusion is that local contacts may be destroyed or not adequately maintained; the third and ultimate stage, therefore, must ensure flexibility in the organisation. It will take some years for these three stages to be accomplished.

While this process is going on, the current day-to-day business must be continued, and it is vital here also that there should be no dislocation of local service or contact. There are some advantages of unification which can be obtained almost at once and will assist the immediate conduct of the business. Rolling stock, for example, previously used in one area will be available for use over the whole system where this is physically possible. Just as the pooling of freight wagons produced greater efficiency and reduced stock, so the common user of locomotives, carriages, road vehicles and other equipment should be of assistance in meeting local needs. Then the rehabilitation of the transport system is urgently required; and, though there is little prospect of this in present circumstances, attention cannot be relaxed from it. The railways, for example, are obviously in a bad way, far worse than they were after 1918; for the next year or two it will be a case of concentrating what resources there are on the danger spots that otherwise might bring the machine to a standstill.

The present financial position is also bad. Very soon there may be talk of another increase in railway charges, the alternative being a subsidy from the Exchequer. The contribution which the Exchequer will have to make for 1947 is larger than was expected earlier last year. Costs are still rising sharply and receipts are falling. No one is likely to view the prospect of a further increase in rail fares and rates with equanimity, but the outlook in 1948 for rail users is not good.

These are some of the immediate problems, and in certain respects they are grim. It is fairly safe to say there is unlikely to be scope from the mere unification of the railways for savings at all comparable with those which were made by the railways between 1923 (when 120 railways were merged into four) and 1938. The real economies will come when the different forms of transport are co-ordinated. The basis for this will be an examination of the flows and types of traffic conveyed by the different types of transport; this will reveal where there is absolute duplication between them and where transfers of traffic can be made between them which will reduce costs without impairing service. Regard must also be had to the joint user of passenger and freight terminals and equipment, to the development of door-to-door conveyance, to the possibility of reconstructing railway terminals so that traffic can be dealt with in one movement without intermediate handling. Consideration will also need to be given to the most economical use of manpower in relation to the traffic to be moved and to economical loading of the transport units, with due regard to the fixed capital costs involved.

The success of co-ordination will depend to a large extent on the charges policy which is adopted. Charges, particularly freight rates, are the main factors which influence traffic to a particular type of transport. The Transport Act requires a complete revision of charges, and all kinds of social questions are involved. Many transport charges today still reflect conditions which existed last century but no longer apply; they have become embedded in the social structure and will be very difficult to alter. In theory and as a long-term policy, it ought to be possible by the co-ordination of transport to reduce costs sufficiently to enable a substantial reduction to be made in the general level of fares and rates, but this depends entirely on the degree of good leadership, creative thinking and technical skill mentioned earlier, and also, of course, on the general conditions in the country.

The same also applies to employment in the transport industry. Tradition plays a large part in the transport service, particularly in the rail-

ways. Obviously, the new unified organisation cannot perpetuate all the varying traditions of the separate companies; a new *esprit de corps* will have to be created, and naturally this may disturb those who have had long experience of the old ideas and methods and thus hinder the work of reorganisation. It should be possible, however, to improve transport employment in many ways, provided there is a clean cut from the conditions of the past.

The conclusion of this brief survey of the possibilities in nationalised transport is one of cautious optimism. The immediate difficulties are real, and no quick results ought to be expected or desired. The more carefully and thoroughly the preparatory work is done, the better the long-term results will be. Meanwhile, the day-to-day public services will require constant attention, and at the earliest possible moment the materials and other resources must be made available to the transport administration to enable the much-needed rehabilitation to be taken in hand.

NORTH KOREA

CONTRARY to common view it is possible to travel in the Soviet zone of North Korea and talk freely to Koreans without any Russians around. One needs the usual military permit to enter the zone; this difficulty surmounted, there are few others. In my trip from coast to coast across the peninsula I travelled with the Minister of Labour, Oh Ki Sup, who went to survey some Social Insurance health resorts on the east coast. I branched off twice with local farm inspectors into the villages. In the capital, Pyungyang, I had talks with writers, reporters, and members of the Government. In resorts and factories I talked singly or in groups to workers. Everywhere I found them anxious to talk about what they had done.

Such Russians as I met usually declined to comment on the country. "It is the Koreans' country; you should ask them," one Russian said. In point of fact, I did not see many Russians, except at the second anniversary of the Liberation on August 15th, when there was a big popular demonstration in Pyungyang, with Russian officers in the tribune alongside the Korean Government, followed by a banquet where mingled Russians and Koreans sang national songs, drank mutual toasts and danced with each others' wives.

In the provinces, according to a Korean farm inspector, there were "no Russian troops but only the Kommandatura." Their job, he said, was "just to give advice." The original hard-boiled troops who came in fighting, and who found it hard to distinguish between Japs and Koreans, have been replaced by small groups of trained specialists, ten or a dozen to a province, two or three to a county seat. No North Korean I met would admit that the Russians governed him in any sense at all. If I mentioned that the Russians had full charge of Korean foreign policy, and were at the moment discussing with the Americans the future form of the Korean Government, the Korean would reply: "Oh, well, foreign affairs," as if these didn't count. If I mentioned that the Russian army was their sole defence, and that North Korea has no native army and not even a Ministry of Defence, the Korean would reply that the treaty with Japan and the agreement with America were not yet made. His attention was fixed on the land reform, the nationalised industries, the elections and local governments. In all these "essential matters," the North Koreans assured me, no Russians ever intervened.

When the Red Army entered Korea in early August, 1945, heavy battles took place in the North, but the Japanese rule remained tranquil in the South, for the Russians stopped at the 38th parallel, while the Americans came three weeks after the surrender of Japan and took over from the Jap officials, continuing much of the former apparatus in power. Hence all pro-Japanese Koreans, former police, Civil Servants, landlords and any persons averse to change generally, naturally fled south to the American zone.

The flight of these Right-wing elements simplified North Korean politics. The Russians did not need to appoint a single official. They merely set free some ten thousand political prisoners and let them go home and organise things. "People's Committees" sprang up by villages, counties and provinces, and coalesced into a Central People's Committee. In the South the Americans ignored and later suppressed these Committees; in the North, they became the Provisional Government. At the same time Peasants' Unions and Trade Unions were rapidly organised, and presented demands, with which the People's Committees were willing enough to comply.

The two chief groups that emerged from jail and from underground were the Communists and a religious party peculiar to Korea known as the Chendoguo. It proclaims a humanist, patriotic, democratic religion. This was the party that led the revolt of 1919, when hundreds of thousands of Koreans rushed into the streets in white robes, phoned the Jap police that Korea was now independent—and were shot down mercilessly. With Communists and Chendoguo energetically organising, and proclaiming tidings of liberation, no Russian pressure was needed to send North Korea Left.

Kim Il Sung became provisional President. He was a legendary figure who fought the Japs for fourteen years from the northern hills, and set up an anti-Jap regime in many counties, even before the Japs surrendered. Surprisingly enough, the next highest posts in the Government, those of Vice-President and Secretary of the Presidium, are filled by two Protestant clergymen, a Methodist and a Presbyterian, products of American mission schools.

The provisional Government put through revolutionary measures with breath-taking speed, but always in response to demands presented by Peasants' Unions or Trade Unions. Landlords' land, which was 62 per cent. of all farm land, was confiscated and distributed to peasants in March, 1946, in response to the demands of the Peasants' Congress, which—after a winter organising campaign—met in late February to present its demands for land to the Government. Seventy-two per cent. of all peasants had previously been paying rent for all or part of the land they tilled. Rents had ranged from fifty to seventy per cent. of the crop. They now became owners, paying a 25 per cent. crop-tax to the Government. They are a solid bulwark of the new regime.

Ninety per cent. of all industry—it had belonged to Japanese individuals or corporations—was given by the Russians "to the Korean people" in a single much-applauded gesture, and nationalised by a law passed on August 10th, 1946. A Labour Law had been passed some weeks earlier, establishing the eight-hour day—seven in injurious trades—with two weeks' vacation on pay, abolition of child labour, and a Social Insurance code. Many Jap summer resorts were turned over to the Department of Labour and used for free vacations for workers.

The first general elections were held in November, 1946. By that time a People's Party of peasants had been formed and had merged with the Communist Party to form the "North Korea Labour Party," the largest party in North Korea. The Chendoguo remained the second strongest party, with large support among the peasants. A Democratic Party had also been formed, mildly progressive, small in size but including many influential intellectuals.

These three parties formed a Coalition ticket and put up a single list. As far as I could learn, there was considerable discussion and many public meetings before the list was formed. Once formed, the voters registered merely approval or disapproval, by dropping their ballots into a white or a black box. Actual voting was secret, behind a screen. In thirteen districts the Coalition candidate was rejected, and new elections held. Village and township elections, held in February, 1947, were competitive—with many candidates, nominated not by parties, but in peasant meetings.

The most important achievement of the new regime has been the improvement of agriculture. For the first time in decades, North Korea supplies all its own feed. Under the Japs the area developed as a source of water-power and a centre of mining and war industry. North Korea today has an unpaid bill against South Korea for 1,000 million kilowatt hours of electric power supplied during the past two years, but has tried in vain to get paid in food. A two years' drive to increase food production, following on the land reform, has increased the sown area. In the three provinces whose boundaries have not changed since Jap days, and whose statistics are comparable, the cultivated area has grown from 3,015,000 to 3,549,250 acres since 1945, a 17 per cent. growth in two years. The fields are also much better fertilised, since North Korea owns its fertiliser works, and a Farmers' Bank lends money for fertiliser.

The standard of living has risen, especially in rural districts. In a village of ninety-seven houses near Pyungyang, the peasants told me that ten families had built new houses in the past two years, six had replaced straw roofs with slates, six more had built summer pavilions—platforms above the tree-tops to catch the breeze on summer nights and grant the luxury of good sleep. There were twenty new radios and forty new sewing machines in that village—all bought within two years. Electricity, paid for by the village, was now in every home.

Industrial production is a harder problem. The Japanese wrecked the factories thoroughly before surrender. Eighty per cent. of the locomotives were put out of commission; blast furnaces and coke ovens were ruined by simply letting the charges cool inside them to a solid mass. The first job of the trade unions was, therefore, to get industry going. Figures of industrial production for 1947 show tremendous gains over 1946. In many cases production has doubled. Comparison with industry under the Japs is impossible, for the nature of the industry has been converted from war industry to peace production, and from industry tied to Japan—in all Korea there was formerly not one finished industrial process—to a self-sustaining industry. The number of workers employed is larger—430,000 against 400,000, according to the Minister of Labour—but output is undoubtedly less, since a large proportion of the workers are still carrying out reconversion and repairs.

Koreans have been migrating from the American Zone to the Russian at the rate of 1,500 a day, according to the figures of the quarantine stations along the Parallel. People in the American Zone claim that the migration is the other way. This the Koreans of the North deny. Figures are complicated by the large movement of Koreans formerly living in Manchuria, who moved across North Korea to their ancestral homes in the South. It seems, however, clear that there has been migration in both directions, the migration from the North having been earlier, and of a different class. In any event, I met large numbers of workers in North Korean factories who had fled from the American Zone, alleging that there was unemployment and police suppression there.

The gap between North and South Korea is therefore increasing, not lessening, in the two years since America occupied the South and Russia the North. The 38th Parallel, at first only an artificial demarcation, has become a boundary polarising two different forms of life and government. The polarisation began with the southward flight of former officials and Right-wing elements generally two years ago. It continues with the northward flight of unemployed workers and Left-wing elements, fleeing the South Korean police. Every Korean I met passionately desires an all-Korean unity. But the barriers to that unity—not only the outward but the inner barriers—seem to grow with every week.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG

HISTORY

I THOUGHT I had never seen such an old, old man. His cheeks were deep pockets, his eyelids were creased and shrunken so that they hardly covered his eyes, he hadn't a tooth in his head. He looked as if he had already died a couple of times and thought better of it, though without caring very much one way or the other.

The old man was sitting in hardly more than a corner of a big armchair, which his grandson had placed in the sun. The grandson, a man of about forty, was tinkering with my car. Various women and children, who might have been two, three or four generations removed from the old man, were moving about the combined garage, wayside bistro and fruit farm.

The grandson straightened himself and looked down the straight Route Nationale, shimmering in the Southern French heat.

"He was here last month," he said.

"Here? The General?" I asked.

"The General himself. Not right here, you understand—his car didn't break down. But in the town. He spoke in the main square. I went to hear him. The old man was crazy to go. He adores the Général. But, of course, he could never have stood the journey. And the excitement."

"Do you adore the General, too?" I asked.

He shrugged.

"In the war, he did his duty. Now, it's different. The war's over. But you can't explain that to the old one. He doesn't know what's over and what's to come."

The old man spoke. It was a noise like a metal ploughshare being dragged over cobblestones. I was surprised to hear the noise split up into intelligible words.

"They won't let me go to see him. I, an old soldier! I should have shaken him by the hand, as one old soldier to another. 'Marshal,' I'd have said, 'We know what we owe you. We don't care what slanders they spread about you. We know how you wouldn't let them pass, how you saved the country. Honour to you, Marshal!'"

"General," said the grandson.

"General. Of course. You don't have to tell me. A Marshal of France doesn't stoop to politics. But it's a good thing the General is standing up to save the country in peace as he did in war."

"You think he will win power?" I asked.

"Not a doubt of it, young man. All the old comrades are for him. There is only one thing against him—that ridiculous name of his. A tradesman's name! Boulanger, indeed! In his place, I'd change it."

The grandson, after the fashion of French mechanics, licked his fingers and touched the plugs to see if they were sparking. Whether because they were, or out of exasperation with his grandfather, he let out an oath.

The old man turned his head on his scrawny neck to look at his grandson. The effect was that of a gun revolving in a tank turret.

"Don't swear like that, youngster. What they pick up in these new-fangled schools I can't imagine. But they say the Emperor himself swears like a trooper. Not the old Emperor, of course—I daresay he did, too, but that was before my time—but the present Emperor."

The turret revolved in my direction.

"And don't stare like that, you! That's your bold-as-brass Parisian manners. And see where it ends. Nowadays these Parisians have no respect for man or God. Building barricades against the forces of the nation, destroying statues, assassinating God's anointed priests. . ."

"Don't excite yourself, grandfather," said the grandson.

"Don't excite myself? And isn't it a thing to get excited about? They bring our most sacred institutions into disgrace—Church, State, Army—and all for the sake of a Jewish spy."

"Try her now," said the mechanic to me.

I got into the car and started her up.

"That's fine," I said. "What was the trouble?"

"Ignition leads, that's all. You'll be in town for dinner all right."

As I got out of the car to help in fastening down the bonnet, I saw the old man's quivering forefinger lifted in my direction.

"Don't forget this!" he was saying. "We'll make them pay. They occupied and ruined half the country—in the end they got as far as here—but they couldn't take Paris. And now they're going to pay for it. They're going to hang. Why, the trials have already started. They'll hang—their Kaiser, their Hitler, Bismarck, the whole rotten gang. The Tiger will see to it. You can rely on that."

Exhausted, he subsided into muttering.

"What do I owe you?" I asked.

"Let's say a hundred francs. Come round the corner and pay me. He can't stand the sight of paper money."

We went round to the side of the house.

"You know," said the grandson, "he's had about all he can stand of it. It'll kill him off for sure if we get any more of it."

"More of what?" I asked.

"History," said the grandson.

MERVYN JONES

The Arts and Entertainment

WHAT NEXT

WHEN I suggested, at the end of a recent article, that much of our pleasure in music depends on the see-saw of expectation and surprise, I knew well enough that the phrase required explanation, amplification, qualification—all those little luxuries, in fact, which are squeezed out of the shrunken columns of contemporary criticism. What I meant was this: the alert listener, while listening to a work in a fairly familiar idiom, is involved in a continuous process of anticipation: he is speculating all the time, though unconsciously for the most part, on what the composer intends to do next. His previous experience leads him to expect a certain development of the melodic line, a certain turn or return in the harmony; and when his expectation proves to be more or less right he enjoys a feeling of aesthetic satisfaction. On the other hand, should the process of satisfied expectation continue unchecked and unalloyed for too long (for example, during the weaker pages of Mendelssohn), the intelligent listener finds his attention beginning to wander; he becomes bored.

Composers show their skill (or used to) by administering a series of shocks, small and great, which are eventually discovered, however violent they may have seemed at the first impact, to bear a genuine structural relation to the composition as a whole: to be, in fact, quite unlike such accidental, non-structural shocks as that of hearing a note played badly out of tune. (Some of the shocks in Berlioz really belong to this latter category, and therefore never sound convincing; they are what Tovey used to call "effects without causes.") But these considerations no longer apply in listening to atonal or twelve-tonal music; a few bars of late Schönberg are enough to convince the listener that he has entered a region without either expectation or surprise; he feels no harmonic pull, no sense of what might be called melodic probability. A paradox emerges: the most elaborately "planned" and undeviating kind of composition ever attempted (for so on paper it can be shown to be) reaches the listener's ear as a chaotic and unpredictable flux; Schönberg himself does not even wish the listener to be aware of the particular tone-sequence in use—and this is certainly a wish which has been widely gratified.

Mr. Ernest Newman once assembled a great deal of evidence to disprove the common belief that great music has never been popular in its own day; the really big things, he maintained, however revolutionary their content, make their way quickly enough with the general public, provided that the latter gets a chance to hear them with reasonable frequency; it is the professionals who make all the fuss. The explanation of this recurrent phenomenon is simple. In listening to a new work, the expectations of an intelligent member of the musical public are much more generalised than those of the professional; his notions of how the harmony ought to proceed, of what is permissible and what isn't, are fewer, rougher, altogether vaguer; consequently he often gets a view of the whole wood while the professors and the pedants are still barking their shins against the individual tree. The famous "false entry" just before the recapitulation in the first movement of the *Eroica* is a case in point: it scandalised professional musicians for decades, while the concert-going public probably felt no more than that momentary, mysterious haze, followed by a shaft of blinding daylight, which was just what Beethoven intended them to feel.

Another point. Are we justified in continuing to use the word "surprise" about a remote modulation which we have known in a favourite piece of music for forty years? Ah! Another time . . . .

* * *

The Morley College concert at the Central Hall on Friday, Jan. 30th, is wholly devoted to *Le Vin Herbé*, a secular oratorio by the French-Swiss composer Frank Martin, based on the Tristan legend in the prose version of Joseph Bédier. The vocal writing recalls that of *Pelléas*, and the score conveys the impression of a distinguished mind, rising at intervals to passages of considerable force and beauty. It is an opportunity not to be missed.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

ARTISTS IN CORNWALL

WEST PENWITH is the name of the final, most westerly knob of Cornwall: it is connected to England by the 4½-mile neck of low land between St. Ives' Bay and Mount's Bay. From the higher ground of this great wind-blown headland where trees grow almost horizontally away from the north-west gales, and even the lichen-grey rocks emerge in horizontal layers to stress the horizons of surrounding ocean, the natives have to look east-north-east, "up England way," for their only land-bound view. For at least two generations West Penwith has swarmed with easels and canvases. On the quays of its grey-stoned villages the fishermen have scarcely been more numerous than "they hartist," if a little more vigorous in welcoming new techniques: the red sails are less in evidence on the boats than in the pictures. The late-Victorian worshippers of red sails in the sunset, no less than the pseudo-Impressionists who survive to this day, were attracted by the irregular roofs and the intricate contours of St. Ives, Newlyn and Mousehole for the simple reason that these things were found to arrange themselves into "compositions," wherever one cast an eye. A certain "aesthetic"—if the word will tolerate inverted commas for a moment—had found *its ideal locus*; also, its adjective—*picturesque*.

Which is all very annoying, because these places are genuinely exciting and deserve a better fate. Undoubtedly an emotional predisposition to resistance is generated in sensitive newcomers by the products of this local industry. In passing, it is worth noting that the wind-blown, Celtic-rocks-and-gorse aspect has entirely escaped the attentions of the old school: its recent discovery by a very different kind of artist was thus unopposed by ghosts of more sentimental versions—but to that I am coming in a moment. The harbours and fishing villages have not been entirely denied a genuine interpretation, but until very recent times, we have had one artist alone to thank for it, the late Christopher Wood. And Wood was not without a debt: with Ben Nicholson he shares a considerable one to an unlettered native of St. Ives, the extraordinary Alfred Wallis, who died a pauper at over seventy during the war, and who may justly be regarded as the British counterpart of the Douanier Rousseau. Every bit as "primitive" (in the sense of being an isolated artistic phenomenon, incapable of receiving influence from anyone, past or present) Wallis made pictures which are less involved in their design or "finished" in their texture than Rousseau's. But Rousseau's finish was commonplace, his vision a sentimental surburban clerk's daydream: Wallis, fisherman and rag-and-bone merchant, was a much more interesting artist; the reality of the sea's white

menace to the huddled dark-green headlands, and of the matchwood boats that didn't always cheat it, was his imaginative and his actual world in one. His images have a profounder source than Rousseau's; their poetry is far more potent and, strangest of all, their design and texture of paint has far more to say to us to-day: both Wood and Nicholson were particularly excited by this latter aspect of Wallis's work. I think these views are not wholly derived from the undeniable fact that I personally would never elect to spend a Sunday afternoon paying a visit to the Palm House at Kew if I could, instead, walk over from St. Ives to Zennor.

That Wallis is now made much of is due to the fact that West Penwith at last has artists capable of reacting to its character. For a year or two a corner of the "Mariners Church," where the St. Ives Society of Artists holds a more or less permanent exhibition, has been occupied by the works of Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, John Wells, Peter Lanyon, Sven Berlin and Bryan Wynter. All live nearby, as did Naum Gabo for seven years, until his departure for America recently. In stunning contrast to the rest of the exhibition the atmosphere of this corner is therefore constructivist. However, Peter Lanyon and John Wells are the younger ones who have learnt most from Gabo, Nicholson and Hepworth. Bryan Wynter's gouache anthologies of the moors' inhabitants—cromlechs, sheep's skulls, abandoned minehead machinery, gorse roots and so on—are in quite another spirit (they have been seen at the Redfern): he makes one aware that Cornwall via Wynter is related to Pembroke via Sutherland. And then there is Sven Berlin, who has fortunately abandoned painting for carving; the results of this change-about are to be seen this week at the St. George's Gallery in Grosvenor St. It is not unduly flattering him, I think, if one mentions the name of Gaudier-Brzeska in speaking of these new carvings of Berlin's. Both begin with the tenderest feeling for a living creature and both develop form in rhythms of *growth*: we might say that the sword-shaped and overlapping leaves of a bud are the analogy—not the square-round, crankshaft rhythms of bones and fossils which the greatest living sculptor, an Englishman, has latterly made so evident to our sensibility. If it is a feat to have avoided the domination of Moore, Sven Berlin might realise just how far behind him he is technically. Berlin does little more than hack his way to "the idea that lies in the stone." In spite of this one is left in no doubt as to the quality of his emotion: here, one feels, is an imperfect craftsman who is none the less a natural sculptor with real possibilities.

This review of peninsular activities is of necessity incomplete; and one categorises the more ruthlessly in restricted space. For instance, John Park, a "St. Ives artist" if ever there was one, is an Impressionist of greater merit than many a London follower of the "Euston Road" and cannot be lumped with 99 other local practitioners. His colour has true quality and displays knowledge of the sort we might attribute to Duncan Grant. In the context of "St. Ives art" Park stands out a mile: what would he be doing if the *Fauves* instead of the Impressionists had provided the stimulus in his youth? Perhaps something more like the vision of an indigo sea, a rose-red church tower (of *grey* granite !), a cliff flaming with pink soil, cadmium yellow-and-black bushes and opalescent rocks, houses and footpaths such as Adrian Ryan discovers in Mounts' Bay? If Ryan is possibly the outstanding British painter under thirty it is partly because he is the only one who is not experimental on a technical level. From Soutine, Utrillo, and Constable he has learnt an extraordinarily mature and expressive use of pigment which perfectly embodies what he has to say about his subject. No one else in this country makes such superb and natural use of impasto. But it is equally *what* he says that wins one: I recall a sea of great pale emerald waves which bulged to the horizon, distorting it, and seemed to lean heavily on the black-and-viridian cliffs, dotted with their pale grey houses: a dramatic cerulean sky hurried behind a near, dark, spiky skyline.

PATRICK HERON

THE MOVIES

"Brighton Rock," at Warner's
"Fun and Fancy Free," at the Odeon

Two qualities of Mr. Graham Greene's novel *Brighton Rock* have failed to reach the screen. One is the personal accomplishment of a style that skewers every detail with a memorably vicious jab: the screen, necessarily, flattens out or takes for granted that cheap squalor of modernity with which prose narrative can sardonically play. The second quality is the novelist's preoccupation with Hell; and this, whether one likes it or not, forms an essential part of the book. "Hell," exclaims the boy murderer Pinkie, "of course there's a Hell—stands to reason." The Catholic conviction of sin and punishment makes him quite certain, so that there is even an exhilaration in his belief. He has grown up with it as do the more triflingly afflicted with a club-foot or a cleft palate. Damnation is his pigeon. "The appalling . . . *strangeness* . . . of the mercy of God." That is the climate of Mr. Greene's cruel and beautifully surfaced fiction, and only a hint, a kink, a bad odour, are transmitted to the screen.

Yet *Brighton Rock* turns out to be a good, even a very good, film. Its filmable character remains; what novelist, except Simenon, has ever thought more instinctively in terms of the cinema? A hard, quick vision propels us from beginning to end. It picks out an agitation in the holiday crowd: here's a man who expects death. He is recognised, casually accosted, marked down, and then (during a mystery ride in the Amusement Park) inconspicuously murdered amid the delighted screams of holiday-makers. The tension, so assumed, is never let drop: every instant adds to our excited complicity and a dread of its outcome. This little gang of slashers, led by the implacable Pinkie, will decorate with its razors, will murder or not as it pleases. Look at the sunshine, take a walk along the front, listen to the band, plug the coconuts from their poles—the virus, in back streets and slum bedrooms, will still be active. *Brighton Rock* gives us an extraordinary sensation of a week at the seaside confused by the most persistent and terrifying of nightmares. One can't resist either the holiday mood—with that surfeit of the crowd that goes with it—or the conviction of evil round the corner: the stabbing affray behind the grand-stand as the horses flash by, the banister that will fatally give way. Pinkie himself, who short-cuts every experience, will find death as inevitably as he has inflicted it on others.

In this part Mr. Richard Attenborough, who also played the role on the stage, attains a quite horrifying lifelikeness. His cat's-cradling reveries, his puritanism and quiet savagery, even his hair-crop leaving the neck bare seem beyond improvement. If he misses anything it is the force that has committed him beyond redemption and that compels followers; but that is, rather, to hark back to the novel. In contrast Miss Hermione Baddeley gives a performance of tingling warmth as the avenging, blowsy, bosomy singer, friend to justice and ghosts. The lesser parts, too, are admirably played: one remembers especially Mr. Harcourt Williams's dilapidated lawyer, banging on the wall for silence, fetching a bottle of Scotch out of a deed-box or a quotation from Shakespeare out of the past. The new cynical-sentimental twist to the end seems to me not out of tune, and Mr. John Boulting's direction is as skilful as we might expect. Altogether this is the most encouraging English film we have seen for many months.

Disney's *Fun and Fancy Free* continues the manufactured gaieties of his cartoon-and-variety features. Shut your eyes and most of the time you might be listening in any night-club with a sugary, optimistic tinge; open them and, if you're lucky, you'll encounter Goofy trying to disentangle his feet from jelly

TEA WITH MRS. GOODMAN

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or something new in the way of whimsical oafish giants. The moments of inspiration are there, but they are very carefully wrapped round. Like Mr. Ely Culbertson—another factory-manager of ideas—Disney owes us some improvements in his system.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

RADIO NOTES

IN a scrupulous effort to be absolutely fair, Miss Rose Macaulay has somewhere said that the English are, with the exception of Red Indians, the world's worst actors. It seems a just enough statement, though there is a point on which I would like to enlarge. Whenever I listen to *Children's Hour*, and listen later in the evening to a more adult entertainment, I am fortified in a belief I have long held that, in general, the power of acting is one which deserts English players shortly after the age of puberty, to reassert itself only after the change of life. Scholars are no doubt right in assuming that Shakespeare was referring to limitations of casting when he made his greatest lady conjecture that one day some squeaking Cleopatra would boy her greatness in the posture of a whore; but it is fair to recall that the Bard was notoriously over-sensitive about actors, and one feels that if he could have seen some of the Cleopatras of our own day he would have felt more than reassured about those of his. Now I do not suppose that there is to-day that high level of acting among children which persuaded Shakespeare and Webster to write long, complex and exacting female parts for boys; nevertheless children retain that enchanting talent for submerging themselves so well in the part they are playing that you think they can play nothing else. Since Miss Angela Glynne's beautifully cool and exact performance of Alice in last autumn's serial version of *Alice in Wonderland*, I have been hoping that she might return in *Through the Looking-Glass;* and so she has, grave and accomplished as ever, at the head of a cast who seem fully aware of the responsibilities the divine lines impose upon them. I understand their occasional nervousness, but I hope they will fluff less than in the autumn. There have been many other good things at five o'clock during the last few weeks, notably an exquisite adaptation of Mrs. Ewing's *The Piece Egg* by Miss Barbara Sleigh, expertly produced by Mr. David Davis. I am not sure how successful the new serial, *The Swish of the Curtain*, written and produced by Mr. John Keir Cross, will be. It has all the irresistible accessories of children's stories: hot summer holidays, arrival of new family next door, discovery of deserted building, etc. But so far it is a little slow-moving; and some of the children, with their remarks about behinds and knickers, are, though real enough, a bit too sophisticatedly uncouth for me. And one of the girls possesses, I say it with regret, a handbag. But I shall not fail to hear more of this work, for a most able cast has been assembled for it. Is it not also time that Miss Josephine Plummer, one of the Corporation's ablest producers, unusually perceptive in her casting, timing and use of music, followed up *The Enchanted Castle* and *The House of Arden* (astutely merged by its adaptor, Miss Felicity Douglas, with *Harding's Luck*) by another E. Nesbit serial? So far as I know, *The Magic City* and *The Wonderful Garden*, both perfectly radiogenic, have not yet been broached.

Mr. Geoffrey Grigson's talk on Dryden was one of the most illuminating and well-phrased literary talks I have heard put out. He was principally concerned to defend Dryden against the charge that he is an "unsuggestive" poet; and the talk was illustrated with magnificent and uncannily resourceful quotations which Mr. Grigson read, very movingly, himself. I wish he would address himself to a full study of Dryden; he would, I am sure, have much to say about that curious aspect of the poet which produced *All for Love*. This was given last week by the Third. It is, to me, one of the dullest plays ever written. It is almightily successful in what it sets out to be: a prolonged serious parody of late-Shakespearean diction, imagery and pausation applied to a classical conception of dramatic shape. But who, with Shakespeare's fresh pineapples at his disposal, would choose Dryden's tinned ones? I felt a deep, rare welling-out of sympathy towards the unfortunate actors on this occasion.

HENRY REED

THEATRE

"Flowers for the Living," at the New Lindsey

This first play by Toni Block pursues for two acts the starkest of Zola-esque naturalism. We are presented when the curtain rises with an uncompromisingly squalid working-class kitchen and Mum's uncompromisingly working-class back. Dad is a no-good, one daughter loose, a second at fifteen a potential pick-up girl. Lil (Miss Joy Shelton), the eldest has learned in six years' service in the A.T.S. that life can be better than this. Just demobilised, she is appalled by the family standards. Will she slip back and lose her new values under the pressure of environment and the family's sneers at her posh accent and her reading of books? Or shall she escape? The choice is dramatised for her by her engagement to a friend of the family, a good solid type (Sydney Tafler) just expected back from Italy. Shall she marry him? Or take her gratuity and go off to better herself? Poor Mum has her own plans for using that gratuity, sorry little plans that will really help no one; and it is Mum in Miss Thora Hird's most skilful and most touching performance who really makes our evening. She cannot go wrong with the part: each tired movement, each screwing of herself to her horrid inevitables, each scratch, in an idle moment, of her wrinkled stocking, each resigned roll of her tongue inside her mouth, contribute to a portrait so convincing that we can even accept her contribution to a somewhat soft-centred moralistic ending. Here is a piece of the most perfect naturalistic acting that it is the greatest pleasure to applaud.

NEWS OF THE WORLD

IN the first year of the last disgrace
Peace, turning her face away,
Coughing in laurels and fires, weeping,
Drags out from her hatcheted heart
The sunset axe of the day.

And leaning up against the red sky
She mourns over evening cities:
Tomorrow springs from her milky breast
Half choked with happy memories
And fulfilment of miseries.

"I am the wife of the workman world
With an apron full of children—
And happy happy any hovel was
With my helping hand under his gifted head
And for my sleep his shoulder.

"I wish that the crestfallen stars would fall
Out of his drunken eye and strike
My children cold. I wish the big sea
Would pity them, and pity me,
And smother us all alike.

"Bitter sun, bitter sun, put out your lions
As I have put out my hope.
For he will take them in his clever hand
And teach them how to dismember love
Just as though it were Europe.

"O washing-board Time, my hands are sore
And the backs of the angels ache.
For the redhanded husband has abandoned me
To drag his coat in front of his pride
And I know my heart will break."

In the first year of the last disgrace
Peace, turning her face away,
Coughing in laurels and fires, weeping,
Bares again her butchered heart
To the sunrise axe of the day.

GEORGE BARKER

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Correspondence

HENRY WALLACE

SIR,—Current editorial comment has puzzled over Henry Wallace's decision to run for President, questioned his motives, minimised his chances. An independent speculation upon the mind of the American voter might not be amiss. In this I enjoy a certain advantage, for I am a not unrepresentative American voter—not a Socialist, still less a Communist.

The Republican party and the Democratic party are Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Domestically, both parties are, and will continue to be, characterised by loud-mouthed impotence and political expediency. They will handle such domestic crises as come their way with equal ineptness. In foreign affairs I am concerned with bringing into play, from the complex character of America, that side of us which is moral, courageous, disinterested, creative—a side which Wallace embodies. We in America have something to give. Instead of giving, under Truman-Taft we buy. We buy political support. Since Truman, State Department policy has shown no single act of nobility. Truman has been commended for the "broader outlook" of the Marshall Plan. Those who imagine that the Marshall Plan represents a kind of transmutation of the Truman Doctrine, or even that it reveals some schizophrenia within the Administration, harbour that perennial illusion which supposes that changing the name of things changes things, that a new title, motto, plan will induce some vital difference, though it serves to cover the same men whose motives remain the same. To Western Europeans, it might not seem to matter whether American help is forthcoming in the name of anti-Communism or otherwise. To me it matters greatly. What hope is offered by a policy, wrapped in fine phrases, whose roots are hate and fear?

In the post-war record of our foreign policy it is the grim fact that, wherever we have had the power to build, we have built nothing good; wherever we have intervened, we have always intervened on behalf of the forces of reaction and corruption—in Greece, in the whole Middle East, in Italy, in Spain, in Germany, in Argentina, in Japan, in China. Wallace is liable to many blunders, but he is not liable consciously to support the forces of evil and death; all of his instincts draw him toward those forces that make for life.

These are reasons why I should like to see Henry Wallace become President. It is argued that he hasn't a chance of becoming President and therefore a vote for Wallace is a wasted vote. I know of a deep dissatisfaction and despair in America which might congeal into support for Wallace and create a stampede in his favour—but that, I concede, is a long chance. Nevertheless, long chance or no chance, I will vote for Wallace, urge my wife to vote for Wallace, suggest to my friends that they vote for Wallace.

Why? First, because Wallace has re-enfranchised me; the choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee is no choice at all. Secondly, because a strong Wallace showing will benefit the causes for which I stand, and a weak showing will visit disaster on these causes. The political course of the nation is not only determined by the party in power, but also by the nature of the effective opposition. As soon as they take office, politicians start preparations for the next elections, which in America are never far off. If Wallace attracts a large vote, the politicians will take that vote into account, they will take Wallace's opinions into account. They will seek to make terms with the new and frightening minority. It would be far better to have Taft in Power, with Wallace in opposition, than Truman in power with Taft in opposition.

Thirdly, because there is also 1952. The Democrats are probably doomed this year. A large Wallace vote will not so much defeat them as make it clear that their only hope of victory in 1952 is to change the nature and aims of their party, either as a means of coming to terms with Wallace or in order to siphon off Wallace's following. If Wallace registers a very strong vote he may force a complete re-alignment in 1952 with his own as the genuine reform party, and a combination of certain Republicans and Democrats in natural opposition.

Wallace offers me a chance to fight, and to hope. Alternatively I must submit to what seems hateful, sterile of good, fruitful of evil, disastrous.

37 Willow Road, N.W.3. ROBERT SOLO

CRISIS IN ITALY

SIR,—The most revealing phrases in Mr. Lionel Fielden's apologia for the de Gasperi Government and his thinly veiled approval of the Fascist regime are the following: "Italy is corrupt, in the sense that Italians do not look gift horses in the mouth and that *almost everyone considers it good fun to cheat the Government and his next-door neighbour. They always have and always, I guess, will.*" (My italics). How well these sentiments show up the patronising attitude of the Englishman who "knows Italy" from several years' residence in "Firenze"!

My chief Partisan friend, who, incidentally, saved at least one escaped British prisoner from capture by the Germans, is at present visiting this country. Not being either a Christian Democrat or a Communist, he found it extremely difficult to secure employment as a non-manual worker in de Gasperi's Italy and, even had he done so, it would have been impossible to live, honestly and without recourse to the black market, on an average wage. The feature which he most admires in Britain is our rationing system. He, for one, does not consider the corruption, which Mr. Fielden appears to find so charming, "good fun."

But, of course, Mr. Fielden is unlikely to be impressed by the experiences of an ex-Partisan. According to him they were, at the time of the Liberation, "a rabble of doubtful persons, armed and ready not only to loot but to wreak every sort of personal vendetta." Mr. Fielden implies that the "respectable" partisans (if he admits there were any), had deserted their "doubtful" cause and gone home, precisely at the time when their aims were in sight of achievement and when their presence was most essential to the advancing Allied armies. This version conflicts strangely not only with logic but with the official reports of the Allies' entry into Milan and the other industrial cities of the North, and with F-M Alexander's public expressions of gratitude to the partisans. I had some contact with the Italian underground and shared a few adventures with those who were risking their lives by resisting the Germans during the occupation, and I do not find it strange that they should demand some say in the management of their country after the sacrifices which they made for it. Perhaps it might be more pleasant for Mr. Fielden, and other English residents in Florence, if Italy returned to a slightly more gentlemanly version of Mussolini's regime, or continued to tolerate the gross inequality and black-market rackets, about which the Christian Democrat Party appears so complacent. But for the sake of the Italians, I hope that a few of the "rabble," who proved so staunch to me and, as I thought, to the cause of freedom, are allowed to play their part in the establishment of democracy.

I do not know in what capacity Mr. Fielden "experienced the war in Italy," but I cannot believe that if he had shared some of the experiences of escaped prisoners, he would be clinging, with such tenacity as it seems, to the views he held in 1922.

Ex P.O.W.

SCOTLAND

SIR,—Mr. Neil McCallum discusses Scottish opinions on devolution and remarks: "There is no indication that an elected Scottish Parliament would not have a Socialist majority." It is, in fact, quite certain that the Scottish people would to-day, as at almost any time in the last twenty-five years, have a

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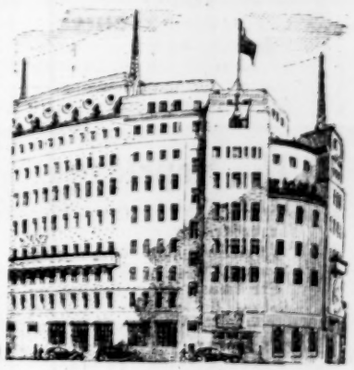

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Socialist majority. There are grounds for thinking that a self-governing Socialist Scotland would rapidly develop a "grass roots" democratic Socialism more effective and inspiring than the rather bureaucratic State Capitalism experienced at present via Whitehall and St. Andrews's House.

Labour's policy on legislative devolution was embodied in the last Self-Government Bill, that moved by the Rev. James Barr and Tom Johnston in 1927, when the Tories laughed and talked it out. The Bill purported to set up a one-Chamber Scottish Parliament with the powers of the Dominion Parliament of Canada. When similar or superior powers are being conferred on India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma, many are asking on what principle the Labour Government is proceeding when it fails to pass the Barr Bill, or some measure to the same effect.

The relevance of Scotland to the wider scene at present bears on your advocacy of West European unity on a democratic Socialist basis. Such a unity involves constitutional federalism. So far as the British Social-democratic movement is concerned, that should start in the British Isles. Justice done now to Scotland would help to leaven Europe.

DOUGLAS YOUNG

THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

SIR,—The public is deeply appreciative of the great efforts being made by miners and industrial workers to increase our exports, and by farmers to supplement our rations. Let it not forget the veterinary surgeon's contribution.

Animal health affects every housewife, every taxpayer, every child in the country. It has important repercussions both upon human health and upon the economic life of the nation. Meat unfit for human consumption, milk containing living tubercle bacilli—these are two of the things against which the veterinary surgeon wages war. The farmer relies upon him for the health of his livestock; and, unknowingly, the city-dweller depends upon him for the eradication or control of diseases communicable to man—rabies, glanders, anthrax, and others.

The economic importance of animal health is indicated by the following figures. Disease, other than tuberculosis, loses us nearly 200 million gallons of milk per year. The deaths of pigs and sheep cost us £6 million worth of pork and bacon, and over £1 million worth of mutton and lamb respectively. The recent outbreak of fowl pest (introduced, it must be stated, as a result of ignoring veterinary advice) has cost us 150,000 laying hens, which means a loss of 15 million eggs during 1948.

The veterinary profession, having recently made a careful survey of the livestock position, is tackling the disease problem energetically. The days when a practitioner was called in only *after* an animal was ill are, fortunately, nearly over, and nowadays much more is being done as regards preventive medicine and herd improvement. In cattle the major diseases are steadily being brought under control. Bovine tuberculosis is gradually giving ground—over a million dairy cows now belong to attested herds. Preventive measures are available against two of the major diseases of pigs. In short, real progress is being made, in spite of insufficient laboratory facilities and vaccines.

The profession is doing much to raise the standard of our average dairy herd, and to assist the farmer in removing low-yielding and unhealthy animals so that their faults will not be perpetuated in our herds and flocks. This is of great importance at a time when an expansion of the livestock industries must be achieved with only a fraction of the feeding stuffs available before the war. The veterinary surgeon helps to ensure that scarce fodder is saved for the best animals, and that an increase in quality takes precedence over an increase in mere quantity.

The profession believes that much meat—at present wasted—could be saved. It would like to see established a centralised veterinary inspection service, with factory abattoirs such as exist abroad. It deprecates de-centralised slaughtering, inadequate inspection, and slaughter-houses that are, in many instances, totally lacking in refrigerating plant.

To sum up, the profession is acutely aware of its responsibilities and is determined to play an increasing part in the national food campaign. It would be greatly helped and encouraged by a wider recognition of the importance of its work.

G. P. WEST
National Veterinary Medical Association.

THE BRITISH IN ASIA

SIR,—John Morris' review of *The British in Asia* (Guy Wint), even allowing for reviewer's independence, seems a startling, and welcome, contrast to the editorial optimism and admiration for our "transfer of power" in India. The review picks out the cardinal statement in the book, hitherto never given to the people of Britain, that the peace of South Asia has not been kept by British power alone, but largely by Indian power mobilized by the British. This was done by holding together Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, etc., whether as army, police and magistrates, engineers and other professionals, educationists, industrialists, local councillors and so on, down to manual workers. Now, there has been no transfer of *power*, but only of paper "powers," i.e., of title-deeds. It is easy enough to mess up a vast estate by a transfer of title deeds—Britain's own power there has gone, *de jure* and *de facto*. The united *Indian* power developed *for* India has been split up, dissipated into discord and the Frontier has melted. Remain frothy declamations of the great progress and power India is going to develop. But if the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION sticks to its guns, it should allow nothing but a denunciation of Guy Wint.

As to "no man wanting peace if his soul be not free," this is a fatal piece of sentimentalism. Given peace, any Hindu or Muslim can perfectly well look after his own "soul." If peace be not the "main concern," then Uno has no meaning or validity.

O. C. G. HAYTER

BETTER NEWSREELS

SIR,—A useful and very welcome contribution to cinema programmes, if films become scarce, could be made by longer newsreels, which are now limited by the Board of Trade to seven hundred feet (eight minutes). That crippling restriction is imposed by the rationing of celluloid, obtained from America. If, however, Hollywood sends us fewer films, and no second features, the newsreels will be strong claimants to some of the film stock thereby made available.

Twice a week editors have to discard much highly interesting material and to cut down stories from four hundred feet, at which length they are good, to a hundred or so, at which they are all but ruined. Merely to increase newsreels to a thousand feet would make them three times more entertaining, the only additional cost being incurred by the extra film stock and its processing by the laboratory.

To increase them to sixteen hundred feet would result in newsreels ranking next to the first features in entertainment value. Such two-reelers would cost more than the present reels, but as the exhibitor would have no second feature he could easily afford the charge.

The change could be effected overnight.

7 Frognal, N.W.3. JOHN DACRE

A NEW TALENT

SIR,—May I correct an error in Mr. Shawe-Taylor's most sympathetic notice of my setting of Sidney Keyes's *Nocturne for Four Voices*. It was stated that another work of mine, the *Saxophone Concerto*, was played at last year's Contemporary Music Festival at Copenhagen. This is not so: this work was one of the six British compositions submitted to the Festival Jury but, alas, it was not selected for performance at the Festival. In fact, it has not yet been heard in public (though three times broadcast in the last year).

PHYLLIS TATE

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

To study the character of Goethe is to be presented with a compendium of human nature. This is all very well in its way; as La Rochefoucauld says, it is easier to understand mankind in general than any individual man. Even so, it is baffling to the critical mind to be faced with a personality about which almost anything can be predicated. An attempt to distinguish particulars has got to be made, if Goethe is to come alive as the very great man we cannot but think him. Mr. Barker Fairley, already known for his excellent *Goethe as Revealed in His Poetry*, has returned to the charge, after an interval of fifteen years, with a much more searching essay* in which he is clear that those who concentrate on Goethe's universality cause him to disappear altogether. In order to avoid this trap, he has taken the outer facts of Goethe's life for granted and has followed the inner history of his mind with a perception, a judicious sympathy and a discrimination which will command admiration even where they do not compel assent.

Where facts are sparse there is always a tendency to make each one support more evidence than it can: the critical imagination easily runs riot over figures like Vauvenargues and Lautréamont; and there are occasions when we feel that a biographer is basing a whole theory on the marks his subject has put against passages in other men's books. With Goethe we are on firmer ground, since the material is enormous and extremely varied. Not only did he talk freely about himself, in letters, conversations, and autobiographic writings of all sorts, but everyone who knew him felt impelled to talk and write about him. Considered in terms of sheer documentary evidence, Goethe is in the top class along with Voltaire, Scott, Disraeli, and Wagner. Yet, compared with these, he appears strangely unseizable.

The reason for this is, in the first place, the chameleon-like quality upon which not only those who came in contact with him, but Goethe himself, insisted so constantly in the pre-Weimar years. The volatility of his mind was at all times as much a drawback as a source of power, for it seldom left him in peace to finish what he had begun: as soon as the first enthusiasm wore off, little but a husk remained. This is true, not only of his poetry, but of his love affairs. He never wholly succeeded in altering the pattern of the Frankfurt years, and this made him perhaps over-conscious of the obduracy of temperament. "At the end you remain but what you are." Meanwhile, the chameleon state was very uncomfortable. Until Goethe was nearly forty the seething kaleidoscope that is the imagination of adolescent genius, refused to keep still. "The gift of communication seems to come first and the ordering process afterwards, and it is this anomaly in his mental growth that gives his early writings their startling immediacy of feeling." Thus Mr. Fairley; and of this period he does not hesitate to use the phrase "arrested development," paradoxical as that may sound. He goes so far as to call Goethe's condition in these years "pathological," but refrains from following up the implication of the word. The manifold evidence available here supports the view that Goethe suffered a protracted adolescence and that he did not begin to move forward into adulthood until he had got right away from Frankfurt and from his mother. As we now see, he instinctively made a wise choice. The place was Weimar, the woman Charlotte von Stein.

In the light of all the facts so ingeniously assembled by Mr. Fairley, there seems to me good reason to believe that the admittedly ambiguous role played in Goethe's life by Frau von Stein was that of a mother-substitute, with the aid of whom he accomplished the first stage of his transformation into full manhood. The epithets which Goethe applies to Charlotte in letters and poems—"custodian," "protectress," "guide," "ministrant," "life-belt"—are highly significant. He even speaks of himself as "tied and tethered" to her, and feels sure that they "met in a former life." On another occasion she is a Madonna soaring heavenward. In a beautiful speech in *Faust*, written not later than 1790, Goethe addresses the Earth-Spirit in terms which make it clear that it is once again Frau von Stein of whom he is thinking. What is known as "the Charlotte poetry" is shot through with the same kind of nature imagery. Meanwhile, Frau von Stein, with a woman's acute instinct for what is expected of her, fulfilled her role with aplomb. Scarcely ever did she drop a stitch or utter a false note. Only *Tasso* leads one to suspect that she occasionally attempted to force the pace. In this most unpleasant play (also, of course, a masterpiece of its kind) the Duke treats Tasso with exemplary clumsiness and lack of *savoir faire*. The secretary, Antonio, is a prig, egged on by the Princess, who (we suspect) had only herself to blame for Tasso's outburst. Even if we take the Duke's view of Tasso's behaviour at its face value, we cannot avoid reflecting that it is futile to patronise artists—notoriously difficult people—if you are going to be offended by their antics and repelled by their foibles. Not so did the Viennese nobility conduct their relations with Beethoven, at nearly the same time as Goethe's appointment to Carl-August of Weimar. *Tasso* and the second version of *Iphigenia* were written after Goethe's return from Italy, but Charlotte von Stein broods heavily over both. In *Iphigenia* she appears to much better advantage, healing Goethe, in the person of Orestes, of the madness which all this time he felt to be hanging over him. This early experiment in psycho-analysis took some ten years to run its course; but it ended in a real convalescence, as Mr. Fairley himself concludes, after some beating about the bush.

Many people dislike this kind of criticism on the ground that it assumes as proven what is at least questionable, and that in any case it confines its object within limits so clinical as to have little value in the field of artistic or of moral discussion. Be that as it may, there seems to me no excuse for setting out a mass of purely psychological evidence and then refusing to pursue your conclusion beyond a certain point. The application of the analytical test to the personalities of great men cannot derogate from their moral or aesthetic achievements, viewed as such.

What Charlotte von Stein had begun, the Italian journey completed. "The parts of him that had been shut off had come together again at last, and they rejoiced in one another as if after a long exile, now happily terminated." The immediate result was the *Roman Elegies*, which have long been established among the greatest feats in German poetry and are interesting to our theory because they show an amazing increase in the poet's steadiness and wholeness of vision. Mr. Fairley seems oddly unenthusiastic about these poems; and although he is more or less obliged to mention Christiane Vulpius (to whom most of them are addressed), he does not add that Goethe's brandishing of this comparatively squalid affair was just the kind of insult which women who risk Charlotte's role must eventually endure—when they have served their purpose.

But however we explain this episode, the fact is evident that after his return from Italy Goethe for the first time saw his way ahead. The year 1786 was a watershed which united the divers streams of his mind and heart. Mr. Fairley draws up a very fair statement of this phase (which includes Goethe's increasing preoccupation with science) in a passage which refers primarily to a conflict of philosophies:

> We can see too that it was not so much as a thinker that he submitted to these mutations, for we may seriously doubt whether at any time in his growing years he thought out his position, but as a man living his life, so that it is scarcely too much to say that he enacted and experienced his philosophy, as well as enacting and experiencing the argument against it, before he clearly admitted it to himself and made it explicit . . . From now on it is broadly true that he avoided the one-sided departures and excesses of his past life and brought the whole of himself to bear at whatever point he was engaged . . . Feeling without thought . . . was as unacceptable to him as thought without feeling.

The result was pure gain—to Goethe's life as to his poetry, for they were intrinsically one. On the scientific side it led to Monism, a view which seems to come naturally to artists, and especially to those—from Leonardo da Vinci to Gerard Manley Hopkins—who are fascinated by the metaphorical beauties to be observed in physical movement and growth (leaves, waves, veins in bodies and rocks) and find these an image of truth. The objective value of Goethe's contribution to scientific thought seems still a matter of controversy: that such researches were of inestimable value to himself can scarcely be doubted. It is clear that they exercised a more consistently steadying effect on his imagination than his public duties, which alone were quite heavy enough (*pace* Mr. Fairley) to have stifled the genius of anybody not physically of the toughest. The benefits of an iron constitution tend to be discounted by those who enjoy them; and this applies as much to Goethe's critics as to the man himself. It seems to me that, in his admiration for Goethe's integral achievement, Mr. Fairley rather overstates this part of his case. As against his view we have Goethe's unequivocal remark, made to Eckermann when looking back over his life from the eminence of his seventy-fifth year, that "my real happiness was in poetic contemplation and creation. But how greatly was this disturbed, hindered and limited by my official position! If I had withdrawn more from public and commercial activities, and been able to live in greater solitude, I should have been happier and have done more as a poet and writer." We can assume, if we like, that Goethe was here deceiving himself; but we are quite unjustified in trying to explain away—as Mr. Fairley does—the permanently conservative nature of Goethe's political beliefs. Mr. Fairley considers Goethe's oblique approach to politics inconsistent with his desire for objectivity, and refers nervously to "uncomfortably conservative views, *not wholly desired by him*, which his negative attitude to politics had made inevitable" (italics mine). Surely all this is highly tendentious, for it ignores the possibility that a positive attitude to politics is quite consistent with conservative views. It is most unlikely that Goethe himself would have relished Mr. Fairley's efforts to reassure us, or that he would have cared to hear himself described as "fundamentally sound [i.e., democratic] even in the social field." Such remarks tell us more about the writer than they do about his subject. Mr. Fairley, it seems, cannot forgive Goethe his distaste for the French Revolution. It is one thing to perceive that Goethe, having only lately succeeded in achieving an inner stability of his own, must have been horrified at finding this threatened by an upheaval in the world outside him; it is quite another to assume that the rational attitude for a contemporary observer of the Revolution could only be one of unqualified acceptance. Putting two and two together and making three, Mr. Fairley concludes that *The Natural Daughter* represents Goethe's attempt to deal with a subject which he could not face directly. The reason he gives is that the theme deals with the nobility as such; not, one may feel, a very cogent reason, since so many of Goethe's other works—from *Götz von Berlichingen* to the second part of *Faust*, not to mention *Wilhelm Meister* and *The Elective Affinities*—are firmly based on a social hierarchy which is not called in question. We may agree with Mr. Fairley that *The Natural Daughter* is a frigid and conventional affair ("I prefer your natural son," was Herder's tart remark, on reading the play). At the same time it would appear less far-fetched to see in the pastoral symphony, *Hermann and Dorothea*, Goethe's considered reply to the Revolution—at least as far as his own country was concerned; and that is all we have a right to expect of him.

* *A Study of Goethe.* By Barker Fairley. *Oxford. The Clarendon Press.* 15s.

In dealing with the intrinsic quality of Goethe's being Mr. Fairley seems to me greatly superior to earlier critics. Of no other great writer is it so true that "the style is the man"—a fact which is always easier to perceive than to analyse. The clues—some of them very cryptic—which Goethe laid, throughout the long construction of his complex character, are picked up and arranged in order by Mr. Fairley with exemplary skill and thoroughness. An empirical genius, Goethe let his poems fall round him as he went along, for all the world as if he had been the hare in a paper-chase. In his lifetime he kept well ahead of the hounds; but, knowing that he must some day be caught, he was determined to appear at the end in a light of his own choosing. "Always put a date under a poem, when you've written it," he said to Eckermann. "In that way it passes for an entry in the diary of your state of mind." For the same reason he aimed at a simplicity of diction, an avoidance of imagery, which resulted in poetry as undecorative as the painting of Holbein or Vermeer. Only the greatest succeed with this degree of plainness: in lesser hands it leads, if not to bathos, to a dullness that is the very negation of art. But Goethe will not have counted this cost: his was the kind of artistic courage which does not know the meaning of fear, of hesitation. As Mr. Fairley, discussing this most uncommon type of poet, very happily puts it: "The more heedless the course, the more likely he is to strike the deep places; if he sails cautiously he stays in the shallows." After *Werther*, Goethe abandoned the tragic attitude to life for a self-acceptance that led him in an upward spiral of achievement—a spiritual feat that accounts in some measure for the astonishing range and longevity of his powers. He sought for a mythology until, in his uniqueness and entirety, he became for others what he himself was seeking.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

PENGUIN ISLAND

Labour Marches On. By JOHN PARKER. *Penguin Books*, 1*s*.

The Case for Conservatism. By QUINTIN HOGG. *Penguin Books*. 2*s*.

The idea of two simultaneous Penguins, one by a Labour back-bencher and the other by a Conservative, must have seemed a certain winner. When Mr. Lane asked Mr. Hogg and Mr. Parker each to write an exposition of the faith of his party, he apparently assumed that since both are intellectuals with old school ties and Oxford scholarships, he need not specify his requirements further: they would reflect two sides of the same political shield.

But alas! for symmetry. *The Case for Conservatism* is not only twice as long as *Labour Marches On*, but it deals with an entirely different subject. Mr. Hogg has produced an extremely racy mixture of dogma and polemic, a characteristically swashbuckling exegesis of his Conservative faith, which hardly deigns to descend to the mundane realms of current fact. Mr. Parker is so possessed by his passion for good works as the best profession of faith, and in particular for recording the facts and figures of the Labour Party's organisation and of the Government's record, that he seems sometimes to forget the creed of Socialism. Paradoxically enough, it is the Tory who makes the abstract theoretical approach and the Socialist whose business-like attention to detail makes him a little dull.

It would be tempting to generalise from this contrast. A party in Opposition naturally favours the abstract, and builds its alternative policy on foundations of moral principle and moral indignation. It must make it appear as though the choice for the electorate is not between the dirty greys of the greater and lesser evil, but the pure white of the Opposition's ideals and the black turpitude of the monster in office. In so doing, it will naturally spend more time and trouble in denouncing the existing evil than in detailing the precise measures which would purge it away. Principles are always most effective in propaganda if their purity is unsullied by any close application to real life; and the Government can always be made to look worse if the alternative to it is portrayed, not as another collection of elderly politicians, but as a band of angelic crusaders. Certainly, to judge from Mr. Hogg, young Conservatives are now assuming the mantle of somewhat irresponsible self-righteousness which so infuriated them when it was worn by some Labour back-benchers between the wars. And again, if we were to draw conclusions from some chapters of *Labour Marches On*, we might assume that Socialism in office has become nearly as humdrum as a Bonar Law administration.

But such generalisations are unfair, both to the two parties and to the two authors. If Mr. Lane had selected Mr. Hugh Molson as his Conservative Penguineer, he would have written a *Conservatism Marches On* worthy to stand on the bookshelf beside Mr. Parker's; while a *Case for Socialism* by Mr. Michael Foot would have proved, with even more than Mr. Hogg's rumbustiousness, that the Left is always right. No! These two books must not be compared with each other or with other Penguins which might have been written, but considered separately and on their merits, the one as a spirited Tory pamphlet, and the other as the annals of the first Labour Government compiled by a scholarly Fabian.

Mr. Parker has had the foreign reader chiefly in mind. His first three chapters—on the history and the constitution of the Party and on the 1945 election—provide all the relevant facts on which a Swedish Socialist or an American trade unionist could make a comparison between British Labour and his own organisation. It is a pity that Mr. Hogg did not glance at them before he composed his fantastic picture of the Socialists' ultimate objective, a one-party state "dominated by an organized minority controlled from Transport House" (sic). Caricature is fair enough in party polemics, but to be effective it must have some relation with real life. The picture of Ernest Bevin and Stafford Cripps as "front men" for the Stalin of the British revolution, Mr. Morgan Phillips, is merely ridiculous. One of the really remarkable facts about the British Labour Government, as compared with either an Australian or New Zealand cabinet, or with an American administration, is its independence both of the political caucus and of the pressure groups on which its electoral strength depends. In this respect, Labour has maintained in all its rigour a unique British tradition, the supremacy of Parliament over Party and of the executive over extra-Parliamentary forces. Mr. Hogg might have been generous enough to welcome this particular continuity of policy, and to agree with Mr. Parker that British Socialism is essentially parliamentary Socialism.

In his survey of Labour's achievements, Mr. Parker shows a Fabian interest in local government and Commonwealth problems. One passage (page 135 ff) on the Union of South Africa and the three native Protectorates merits special attention. It is written with a violence of suppressed passion which sets it aside from the rest of the book. The curious-minded might easily conclude that here was an issue on which Fabian conscience came into conflict with the needs of the Dominion Office, from which Mr. Parker was suddenly removed after a brief tenure of office as Under-Secretary.

The chapters dealing with planning and nationalisation are not so satisfactory. Here it is Mr. Parker who would have benefited by a preview of Mr. Hogg. It may well be true that "the great majority of industries are considered by Socialists as suitable at some stage or other for some form of public ownership." But has this very vague belief been confirmed by experience since 1945? How far does planning demand the transfer of ownership? What are the dangers of over-centralisation and the destruction of local initiative? (Mr. Parker sees them clearly enough in the relations of Whitehall with local authorities.) Mr. Hogg has a great many pertinent questions of this sort to ask, and he asks them challengingly, with the eagerness of a lawyer whose brief has led him for the first time to delve into the subject. It is a pity that Mr. Parker does not take them seriously. Generalisations about public ownership are good enough for Socialists in Opposition. But Socialist theory to-day requires an objective critique of nationalisation by Act of Parliament, and an open-minded inquiry into less cumbersome methods of state planning which may combine public control with more effective incentives to industrial efficiency.

The Case for Conservatism is certainly readable. Mr. Hogg writes with fire in his belly; and, if the flames sometimes rise so high as to cause literary apoplexy, his colleagues in the House will know that in this respect his book does not differ from his speeches. There are indeed two Quintin Hoggs. One has a first-rate legal mind, and a passionate belief in parliamentary institutions, the other is a red-faced barker of the Tory hustings.

At his most reasonable, Mr. Hogg is ready to admit that there is eighty per cent. of agreement between the parties, and only to regret the failure to form a National Coalition in 1945. Moreover, in the long section which he devotes to a searching analysis of nationalisation, he is pertinent and constructive. But then suddenly the blood rises to the head: Mr. Hyde replaces Jekyll and he barks out "Yaboo, Gestapo!"

This sort of political schizophrenia is an occupational disease of the British Parliamentarian, who must combine the camaraderie of St. Stephen's with the knockabout of the public platform. But in Mr. Hogg's case it is unusually acute. It would be easy to say that he lacks political judgment, but this would be unfair. He has both understanding and moral principles, and he is more embittered by his own leaders' abject failure to live up to the Conservatism which he preaches, than by the Government's application of the Socialism which he condemns. Here perhaps is the real cause of the unevenness of a brilliant book. He feels that to fight Socialism successfully, his party must have a creed in tune with the times, and he knows that this is precisely what it lacks. Whereas Mr. Parker can tell the story of Socialist achievement concisely in a shillingsworth of Penguin, Mr. Hogg takes two in an attempt to persuade the Conservative Party to have some principles and some policy.

Since both authors completed their books during the fuel crisis, their discussion of foreign policy is a little remote. To read them is to remember how quickly party polemics can be outmoded by facts. They both write as though Britain were a going economic concern, and the only question were, "Which way should it go?" I hope that we shall soon be reviewing two new Penguins which state the issues afresh, not in terms of an insular Britain which Mr. Parker and Mr. Hogg tacitly assume, but of a Western Europe, which they both almost entirely neglect.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

KATHERINE MANSFIELD

The Garden Party, and other stories. With coloured lithographs by MARIE LAURENCIN. *The Verona Press. Collins.* 2 *gns.*

"Oh, dear!" I kept saying to myself as I read (or rather, after twenty-five years, re-read) these stories of Katherine Mansfield. "Oh, *dear*! Why did I go back to them?" For they were a great joy when we first read them, and they had been a lovely memory ever since, and on the re-reading both the joy and the memories have sadly wilted. They are like roses in tissue whose petals fall if one touches them. What has happened, or were they never as good as we thought them? One hesitates to say that times have changed, for times might change again; yet things have, I think, happened since the decade during which the bulk of these tales were written (1912–1922)—happened, that is, in literature, and especially in the short-story, to cause a noticeable "dating." I will give one example.

One of the things that has happened is the dilation of modern prose, by which I mean that

it has escaped from the dictionary with amplified radiations and a much larger suggestibility. Language has become more intense and packed. This has become most evident, apart from specialists like Joyce, in the short-story; for the short-story has, in compressing itself on the one hand and attempting to convey more on the other, the greater need of this dilated English. When, for example, Miss Elizabeth Bowen speaks of woodwork as being "exasperated" by the heat; or of a character who "attacked the silence with loud laughter," or of an "extinguished castle" (at night), or of "a smothered island," or of a rather silly woman as "detained in childhood," she is using language which formerly appeared only in heightened moments, rather daringly as when Emma Bovary saw, in her romantic reading "les paysages blafards des contrées dithyrambiques." Katherine Mansfield is not the only writer whose work has suffered by comparison with later achievement. We can already read much of the earlier Joyce with a shock of surprise at the innocence of his style and the surface literalness of his English. *Dubliners* (1914) is written in explicit prose of the most ingenuous kind.

> Night after night I had passed the house (it was vacation time) and studied the lighted square of window; and night after night I had found it lighted in the same way, faintly and evenly. If he was dead, I thought, I would see the reflection of candles on the darkened blind, for I knew that two candles must be set at the head of a corpse . . . .

But if one compares that with the last sentence of his last story in the same volume one sees, at once, in what direction he, and modern prose, was going:—

> His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon the living and the dead.

The master-word there is "descent" in "descent of their last end," with its radiated suggestions of "descending snow," "ascending to Heaven," "the Lord will descend," etc. The word is taken out of its niche in the dictionary and given unique life.

Katherine Mansfield never wrote with any of this compression or intensity of language or, its content, feeling. She had fanciful ideas; and sometimes, though far less often than I had thought, she had an amusing eye—the baby toddling away and coming a sudden flop: those still-delightful children in the otherwise boring and long-drawn-out *Prelude*, with their dog Snooker ("All fighting dogs smell")—but I would not say that she ever wrote with imagination or remembered with passion. She quoted Montaigne at the beginning of this book, saying, "Montaigne dit que les hommes vont béant aux chose futures; j'ai la manie de béer aux choses passées." It was a *manie* in the sense of a gentle fancy rather than a divine folly, and the hankering was little more than a dreamy memory. If one wants a contrast with a real passion for the past, and in another woman, one might go to *La Maison de Claudine*, to the first chapter, with its tormented refrain of the mother calling her children home at evening.

> "Où sont les enfants?"
>
> Deux reposent. Les autres jour par jour vieillissent. S'il est un lieu où l'on attend après la vie, celle qui nous attendit tremble encore, à cause des deux vivants. Pour l'aînée de nous tous elle a du moins fini de regarder le noir de la vitre, le soir. "Ah! Je sens que cette enfant n'est pas heureuse . . Ah! Je sens qu'elle souffre."
>
> Pour l'aîné des garcons elle n'écoute plus, palpitante, le roulement d'un cabriolet de médecin sur la neige, dans la nuit, ni le pas de la jument grise. Mais je sais que pour les deux qui restent elle erre et quête encore, invisible, tourmentée, de n'être pas assez tutélaire: "Où sont, où sont les enfants? . . ."

True, one must not ask of a writer more than a writer can give. One must not expect from Katherine Mansfield that cry across the vague of death. She had charm, and that light sweetness does persist, in little eddies and gushes. I feel she wrote too easily, too lengthily, too self-indulgently, happy to recollect, not critically measuring what she had to give, either unwilling or unable to win intensity by compression. Above all she did not advert to the truth, true of prose as well as poetry, of Saint Beuve's saying, that "La poésie ne consiste pas à tout dire mais à tout faire rêver." Her memories were so happy that it seemed to her sufficient to speak of them; how much recreation she did in most of these tales I do not know, but one would think very little; they have the air not of created things but of recollected things, and the reader, curiously, will always share more in the created thing over which a writer has toiled to give it a life of its own. With Katherine Mansfield we are a little like the child in one of her stories who saw the rich girl's doll's house; we see, sense, or assume Miss Mansfield glowing; but it is she who has most of the fun.

The present edition is a very finely produced volume. It is a luxury edition which was printed in Italy before the war, was impounded there by the Germans, released at the time of the Liberation and has only just arrived here. It was a happy idea to choose the lithographs of Marie Laurencin as illustrations; they have just the same iridescent charm as the tales they adorn. It is like old times to handle so pleasant a book.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN

THE CONCERT OF EUROPE

The Aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. By H. G. SCHENK. *Kegan Paul.* 16*s.*

One feels that the editor should have sent Dr. Schenk's book to Dr. Schenk for review, for he alone perhaps of living men has sufficient knowledge of his period either fully to appreciate or adequately to pick historical holes in it. There appears to be no book or document published in the last 170 years remotely bearing upon the Napoleonic wars or its aftermath which Dr. Schenk has not devoured and digested to such purpose that he can quote its authority to establish a fact or confirm a theory. Indeed his omnivorousness and passion for proof by confirmation are not satisfied by what has been published; he will quote Mr. Jones's unpublished thesis on *English Foreign Trade in the first half of the Nineteenth Century* and give you the number of the page in the MS. from which he gathered his information. One felt that, had one known Mr. Jones's telephone number, as a conscientious reviewer one should have rung him up to ask him to verify the page number.

There are dangers in this kind of learning and method. If Mr. Smith is writing a book, the quotation of a fact or opinion stated by Mr. Jones in Mr. Jones's book is of itself no more authority for their accuracy than if they were stated by Mr. Smith himself. Yet Dr. Schenk and some other very learned historians do not appear always to remember this. There is also a danger for the reader that, in this kaleidoscope of learning, he become dazzled and bemused so that after a time he cannot see the facts or the book for the authorities.

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ROBERT HALE

Dr. Schenk has not altogether escaped the pitfalls of "scientific" history and omniscience. But he has, nevertheless, written a book of great interest and value. He is much more successful in the first part of the book than in the last. His description of social conditions in Britain, Russia, Germany, and Austria at the end of the Napoleonic wars and their effect upon the history of the years which followed the war is admirable and his immense knowledge, which he here uses with skill and discretion, enables him to illuminate his thesis by highly interesting, and often amusing, facts. His analysis of Alexander's strange character and of his effect upon the period is extremely good, but his historical judgment of character is not as reliable as of facts and events. He is inclined to label men with an adjective and leave them at that; Gentz, for instance, is almost always labelled "cynical" and a very superficial view of his mind and character, and even of his influence upon events, is somehow conveyed to the reader in this way. Gentz was, no doubt, cynical, but he was much more than that; and could any intelligent man who, like Gentz, lived at the centre of things and behind the scenes and "knew everything" during the Napoleonic wars and after them not be cynical?

The book is, to judge from the subtitle, intended to be a study of the Holy Alliance, of that Concert of Europe which came into existence with the defeat of Napoleon and gradually disintegrated until by 1825 it had ceased to exist. Here, too, Dr. Schenk throws valuable light upon the course of events and his narrative is well worth study by those who are passing through the no less painful aftermath of the Hitlerian wars. But the third part of his book, which covers the period of disintegration, is not as successful as the two previous parts. There are interesting things in his account of Spain, Naples, and Greece, but the facts seem to get the better of him and are not integrated into a coherent picture as they were when he dealt with the Great Powers.

LEONARD WOOLF

THE POET AND SOCIETY

The Dedicated Life in Poetry. By PATRICE DE LA TOUR DU PIN. *Harvill Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Spender, in a well-argued preface to this remarkable little book, once more draws the distinction between artists who are concerned mostly with content, and those who prefer form; and he does so without using the labels "romantic" and "classic." As examples of such opposites, he gives Valery and Claudel; T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence; Stefan George and Rilke. "In each pair," says Mr. Spender, "the poet whom I have placed first is disciplined by the pre-occupation to write only the poetry for which he can create the form; whereas the poet whom I place second is, as it were, obsessed by his poetic experience, which is more important to him than the form in which he writes."

This young French poet (whose name is likely to be new to most English readers) is one among many of us who have worried over this dualism and have set about to build a philosophy of art which shall get rid of it. The trouble is that nobody can solve the problem by theory, because it is a problem of fact, of experience, and it can be solved only after first-hand contact, of suffering and also of joy. If it were not so, Croce would have put the matter right for us all, and once and for all. His great system of aesthetics covers, I think, all that the young author of this mystical essay on the dedicated life has to say; but the newcomer says it in a personal way, and therefore with a new sharpness, the outcome of his own intense experiences, whose edge enables him to cut down to the very bone once more. It is therefore a deeply moving piece of work and well worth study, especially by those—if there are any left—who still think of the poet in terms of what they themselves call dialectical materialism. De la Tour du Pin offers a challenge—so far as he is militant—to the conception of the poet's function as it is stated, for example, in Russia, and as many of our poets of the Nineteen-thirties posed themselves.

De la Tour du Pin brings back the element of mysticism to the nature and work of the poet. His fundamental, which, as I suggested, is a Crocean one, is that the poet is not different in kind from the rest of humanity, but only in degree. Any form of withdrawal from society, therefore, is morbid and damaging to his nature and his art. His duty is to extend himself, by an exquisite sympathy and watchfulness, as far as his own vitality will allow; and to increase that vitality by an obverse activity of retreat, contemplation and humble self-regard. The two processes, seemingly antinomial but by the paradox of life really complementary, must be ever in action, and the skill of the poet must be to order his life so that they can function at the same time, creating an eternal and simultaneous flood and ebb of consciousness; the flood coming in solitude, the ebb going in social duty.

I hope that is lucid. The essay itself is not easy to read, and no doubt translation does not help to clarify the author's intention, although the translator, Mr. G. S. Fraser, has done a most graceful job. The difficulty is not a verbal one. It is due to the quick sensibility of the author, and the way in which he telescopes the expression of experiences, taking for granted the reader's equal sensibility in the recollection of personal experience, and the interpretation of it. Generally, it is helpful in understanding him to see how emphatically he builds his aesthetic upon a conception of a time-basis. That is, he uses time as a painter uses the canvas, and the job of the poet is to fecundate time, either historical or personal, and not merely to run parallel with it, as a mechanical measurer.

> It seems [he says] that the colonization of time may consist in constructing this sort of spiritual road that opens out beyond time, and not in carrying into the world of expression living duration as it really is; application and attention bring another sort of truth to birth, and the kind of time which they employ has its bearings set towards concentration and eternity.

That "set towards" results in a build-up of a mode of work which is profoundly mystical. Yet the rule is established with such meticulous care, through a close examination of the small experiences in contact between self and circumstances, that an almost Pascalian nicety of analysis results. Thus the poet is clearly pictured, an eidolon of everyman, yet a creature with him, both being abjured to "love spiritual happiness in a childlike way; and for adults that means love spiritual happiness as if every moment were the first." It is not new wisdom. But no wisdom is new.

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ICONS

Russian Icons. By DAVID TALBOT RICE. *King Penguin Books.* 2s. 6d.

For many years now the two chief books on Russian icons, published in England, have been out of print. It is therefore a pleasure and surprise to find that the King Penguin series have continued their hitherto excellent work with a text by the foremost English scholar on the subject and with sixteen coloured illustrations, taken, I believe, from some of the plates in *Masterpieces of Russian Painting*.

Professor Talbot Rice gives an admirable, brief survey of the birth and growth of the Russian Icon from its parent Byzantium, down to its decay after the last flowering with Denys's work in the sixteenth century. He also elucidates the extremely specialised work of placing the various icons mentioned, in their respective schools, whether of Novgorod, Suzdal or Pskov; a task made far more difficult than a similar elucidation of the Italian schools, since the Russians followed the various set iconographical formulae in all their schools, throughout their history. In this book there is nothing to criticise, but reading it and admiring its illustrations give an appetite for more, which owing to Russia's present isolation does not seem likely to be satisfied.

The dominant influence in Russian art until this century has been foreign. Since the arrival of the Metropolitan Theopeniptus in Kiev in the 11th century, bringing with him Constantinopolitan artists, the names of the men, who have come from abroad to work for the Princes or Tzars, have always been known. Theophanes Grec, Schoonebeck, Picart, and Cuvilier are a few in painting: there are Mueller and the Englishman Gardner in porcelain. Fioravanti, Galloway, Trezzini, Cameron and Rastrelli in architecture and an unending list of foreigners in every branch of science, from that of art to that of war. These influences have been absorbed and have been translated into something peculiar to Russia, but the signs of the influences have always persisted. The horse, of such directly Persian origin, which St. George rides, in the church of his name in Starya Ladoga painted about 1160, appears again in plate 14 of this book, on an icon of the sixteenth century. He is still being painted on the lacquered boxes of the Palek workers to-day.

This fertilising from foreign sources has done more good in Russia than probably any other country and, at the time of the first icon mentioned in this book, the fact was realised. The daughter of Prince Yaroslav had married Henri I of France and soon Prince Vladimir was to marry Gytha the daughter of Harold, killed at Hastings. To-day, after eight hundred years of "civilising," no such outside influences are permitted. The result is stagnation in the arts.

Nor is this isolation a blow merely to Soviet artists. Since the war the mediæval frescoes of France and Italy have been the subject of monographs with coloured plates published on them.

From Russia the student has been unable even to discover whether the frescoes in Novgorod by Theophanes Grec are extant since the war. There is no illustrated work available on the early frescoes in the Cathedral of St. Demetrius in Vladimir (not the Cathedral of the Assumption, as Professor Talbot Rice writes). We do not know whether Professor Frolov has been allowed to continue the restorations of the mosaics in St. Sofia in Kiev. Perhaps the last centuries' hideous repaintings of the Rublëv frescoes in the Cathedral of the Dormition in Vladimir have been removed, and perhaps the Government have made it easier for Soviet students to visit the formerly almost inaccessible monastery of Therapont, in Vologda province, to study the last great cycle of frescoes painted in Russia by Denys? One wonders; but no information appears to be forthcoming, and we must be thankful to King Penguin Books and to Professor Talbot Rice for allowing us even a restricted peep into a fascinating and exquisite world.

DEREK HILL

Week-end Competitions

No. 935

Set by Roger Marvell

Six guineas are offered for four comments, each of not more than thirty words, that might have been made respectively by Dr. Johnson, Dr. Arnold, Queen Victoria and Oscar Wilde, if in their days a lawyer had been made headmaster of a great school. Entries by January 27.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 931

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Six guineas are offered for English versions of the following lines.

Si je perds bien des maîtresses,
J'en fais encor plus souvent
Et mes vœux et mes promesses
Ne sont que feintes caresses,
Et mes vœux et mes promesses
Ne sont jamais que du vent.

Quand je vois un beau visage,
Soudain, je me fais de feu;
Mais longtemps lui faire hommage,
Ce n'est pas bien mon usage,
Mais longtemps lui faire hommage,
Ce n'est pas bien là mon jeu.

Plus inconstant que la lune,
Je ne veux jamais d'arrêt:
La blonde comme la brune,
En moins de rien m'importune
La blonde comme la brune,
En moins de rien me déplaît.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

In these verses, so charmingly uncharacteristic, by the great Corneille I seem to catch the tone that I like in Suckling, who was almost exactly his contemporary. The entries however that attempted pastiche are disappointing. One competitor rightly points out that "encore" should have been spelt without the final *e*; another quotes an epigram unknown to me: "Les traductions sont comme les femmes. Lorsqu'elles sont belles elles ne sont pas fidèles, et lorsqu'elles sont fidèles elles ne sont pas belles." There were hundreds of entries, including some ingenious rhyming by a Dane. I recommend that a first prize of £4 be divided between Fergie and L. E. J.; a second prize of £1 to F. C. C. (the introduction of the word "constant" in the second verse seems to me a pity, and the beginning of the third verse is a trifle ambiguous); give consolation prizes of ten shillings each to Tab and W. L. Lindsay (the last of whom may well deserve either more or less: I am no judge of Scots). Other entries of outstanding merit from T. St. George, M. H. Asquith, L. E. G., Gaby, Allan M. Laing, Cedra Osborne and William Bliss. The envious rivals of R. J. P. Hewison may be consoled to hear that this once he has, in my view, come utterly to grief, and in a task that seemed peculiarly suited to his genius.

I lose them as I win them,
And still they come across;
The tales of love I spin them,
There's really nothing in them;
The tales of love I spin them
Are simply applesauce.

Published January, 1948

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I burn with admiration
For each new face I see,
But constant adoration
Is not my recreation;
No, constant adoration
Is not my cup of tea.

Thus fickleness requires me
To seek love evermore;
A woman who inspires me
In less than no time tires me:
A woman who inspires me
At once becomes a bore. FERGIE

For one Love that takes wing
I have two that are kind;
My kiss and my ring,
They don't mean a thing,
My kiss and my ring
Are gone with the wind.

For a Helen, emotion
Consumes me like flame;
But of dog-like devotion
I haven't a notion,
No, dog-like devotion
Is hardly my game.

I have no fixed address,
(Has the Moon as she sails?)
Beggar-maid and Princess,
I couldn't care less,
Beggar-maid and Princess
Are my dear nonpareils. L. E. J.

If a mistress from me flies
Many more I make my own:
All my flattering vows and sighs,
All my courtesies are lies;
All my flattering vows and sighs
These are made of wind alone.

When a beauteous face I find
Straight my heart is turned to flame,
But to serve with constant mind
Is no custom of my kind,
But to serve with constant mind
That has never been my game.

To the fickle moon in thrall,
Never could I constant be:
Fair or dark, and one and all
They in less than no time pall,
Fair or dark and one and all
Each in no time wearies me. F. C. C.

(Lyric for Billy Bennett)

It's true I'm always losing lots of lovelies,
Yet it's just a game of roundabouts and swings.
My promises are given pretty cheaply:
They don't land me in the cart—or platinum rings.

I've only got to focus on an eyeful
And I'm goosey from the fanny to the feet.
But if she wants me true to her for ever,
Well, she's asking for what isn't up my street.

I keep it on the move, just as the moon does,
And my constancy is little more than nil.
The blondies, the brunettes, and even khaki's,
Why, they're all the same to
Yours sincerely, Bill
TAB

Whene'er I'm jilted by ma joes
There's ithers I can find,
An' a' ma hertwrung sighs an' woes
Are jist the way the wooin' goes,
An' a' ma hertwrung sighs an' woes
Are jist a pickle wind.

Ae blink frae a bonny ee
Can fan ma love tae flame;
But suin' favours on ma knee,
I count beneath ma dignity,
But suin' favours on ma knee,
I canna thole the game.

The moon an' me's an unco pair,
We're no tae haud nor guide.
The bonny lasses, broon or fair,
The morn I canna loe nae mair;
The bonny lasses, broon or fair,
The morn's morn I canna bide.
W. L. LINDSAY

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 932

Set by Sebastian

The usual prizes are offered for a clerihew on a figure in English history.

Report by Sebastian

Clerihews are always a huge haul. After the first hundred or so the mind gives way and the desperate setter makes a random choice, with one eye on the paper ration. I have picked out the following 13 who are to have 9s. 6d. each.

One of Henry's peeves
Was that Anne of Cleves
Was cold
To hold. J. C. WALKER

Anne of Cleves
Was too plain, one conceives,
To emulate the sin
Of Anne Boleyn. LESLIE JOHNSON

Said Boadicea,
"Your idea
That I'm in the bag, Suetonius,
Is erroneous." FRANK BUCKLAND

Sir Thomas More
Thought the Reformation a bore;
He said, "If we had the Pope here
It would be Utopia." "PIBWOB"

King Arthur's period is so misted
That it is doubtful if he existed:
Some people think that Malory
Was playing to the gallery.

Louis Philippe
Etait un sale type;
Il essayait d'être, à la fois,
Republicain—et Roi. YORICK

Sir *Francis* Bacon
Is sometimes mistaken
For another old codger
Called *Roger*. P.C.C.

George Stubbs
Got into several of the better clubs
Little realising how often he
Was mistaken for Zoffany.

The New Statesman crowd would have been abhorred
By Laud.
Being an Archbishop
He would probably have had them purged with hyssop. CHARLES BARRATT

Good Queen Bess
Said English sanitation was a mess.
Sir John Harington cried: "I agree!"
And invented the W.C. ALLAN M. LAING

The Venerable Bede
Could read.
It's a pity he couldn't spel
As wel.

William the Bastard
Frequently got plastered
In a manner unbecoming to the successor
Of Edward the Confessor. "LAKON"

Dr. Sacheverell
Remarked "I shee sheveral
Arguments in favour of Divine Right."
But then, he was tight. BARRY LINTON

"This," said the Venerable Bede,
"Is a very important matter indeed.
Would it be uncanonical
To contribute to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle?"
BARRY G. SMALLMAN

Edward the Confessor
Was not in any way an Aggressor;
Some who were afterwards King
Were much more that sort of thing.
SILVIA TATHAM

William Laud
Once walked as a don in The Broad;
But he had to die
For favouring The High. W. D. CAMPBELL

Company Meeting

BARCLAYS BANK

HIGHLY LIQUID POSITION

The 53rd ordinary general meeting of Barclays Bank, Limited, will be held at 54, Lombard Street, London, E.C., on Jan. 23rd.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Sir William Goodenough, Bt., on the report and accounts for the year ended 31st Dec., 1947:—

At the end of 1947 our current, deposit and other accounts totalled £1,247,866,975 against £1,171,726,109 at the end of 1946. This smaller change over the year, which is in keeping with the general trend of the clearing bank figures as a whole, contrasts strongly with the rapid expansion in the previous 12 months, associated with the extreme pressure for cheaper money. The net profit amounted to £1,637,706, a reduction of £38,696.

The liquidity of the parent bank is characteristic of the group as a whole. The total assets of the group are nearly £1,800 million, a striking indication of the wide ramifications of our bank, but even more striking is the thought of all that lies behind these figures—a great co-ordination of effort giving effective and indispensable service over a vast area of the world. The group is, indeed, a machine of precision which makes possible an immense economy of effort at home and throughout the whole sphere of its operations overseas, and it is a living and developing organisation. More than this, through its activities abroad it is a substantial earning asset for this country.

NATIONAL PROBLEMS

The events of the past year have brought the nation abruptly to the point where urgent and far-reaching decisions have become inescapable. Our problems have overtaken us and at such a juncture there is no alternative to vigorous action. What is being determined by current decisions on matters of domestic policy is nothing less than the future shape and trend of the British economy—in particular of British agriculture and of British manufacturing industry in a competitive world. I have quite deliberately mentioned British agriculture first not only because, in spite of its vicissitudes, it has remained one of the greatest of all our industries but because I believe it has a most vital role for the future, both as a business which is at the same time a balancing factor in the make-up of the nation and as a healthy and satisfying way of life for a large number of our people.

Experience tells us that in devising the means of solving our existing problems we should keep an eye on the long term; that we should look beyond the immediate future and see to it that the remedies we bring to bear for the easement of present difficulties are calculated also to produce a balanced economic pattern that will stand the test of time.

FUTURE COMPETITION

If this is not done, if we allow the very magnitude of our problems to drive us into ill-chosen courses, then we incur the risk of developing a form of organisation which may prove to be out of harmony with future needs. We may thus sow the seeds of another process of major readjustment. We can see all too clearly how intense a degree of competition will eventually develop in world markets. We can see also, from the course of past events, that the growth of manufacture abroad will continue as the relatively undeveloped countries seek the added stability and higher living standards that they see in the possession of secondary industries. At a time not far distant therefore, we must be ready for the disappearance of the outlet for some of the products that we have hitherto supplied in large quantities.

There is one direction in which, I think, there may be considerable scope for the United Kingdom in the future and that is in the provision of financial and other services for which she is so eminently fitted by long association with commerce and with international affairs. Here the line of policy should be to place no obstacles in the way of growth, and wherever possible to encourage it. The restoration of sterling to full status as an international currency is, of course, a condition of success in this sphere.

Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.

THE British Council invites applics. for post of Assistant in the Bristol Office. Candidates should be men aged between 25-35, and must possess an hons. degree (pref. from Bristol Univ.). Exp. in adult education and admin. work are desirable. Duties include acting as general assistant to Area Officer, planning Council courses, acting, where necessary, as Director of Studies for these courses, and maintaining liaison with the University. Salary according to age and qualifics. within the scale £428-£690 p.a. (incl. consolidated addition). Applic. forms and further partics. from the Director, Personnel Dept., The British Council, 3 Hanover St. W.1, to whom completed applic. forms shd. be retd. by Jan. 31.

WESTMINSTER City Council. Organiser and Secretary (male) of proposed Community Assocn. for Abbey District. Temporary appointment for a period not exceeding 12 months, the position then to be reviewed. Salary A.P.T. VI of Natl. Scales (£555-£20/£25-£620, plus bonus now £59 16s. p.a.). Age limit 30 to 45 years. Further information obtainable on application to Parker Morris, Town Clerk, Westminster City Hall, Charing Cross Rd. W.C.2. Canvassing disqualifies. Applics., marked "Organiser and Secretary," stating full name, address, age, war service, examination qualifics., present and past appointments, social and recreational exp., whether related to any member or chief officer of the Council, with copies of three recent testimonials, must be received by Jan. 31.

MARKETING Officer. The Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board, Accra, is prepared to consider applics. from Gold Coast Africans to undergo training in London in the marketing of cocoa with the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Co. Applicants are reqd. to have a degree in Economics, or one of similar status, or extensive business exp. Age limits between 24 and 35 years of age. Salary to be paid will be at rate of £525 p.a. plus a cost of living allowance of £150 p.a. while resident in London. Applics. giving full details of education, and exp., to: The Managing Director, Gold Coast Marketing Co., Ltd., 15 Victoria St. London, S.W.1, by Feb. 16, 1948. Names and addresses of 2 refs. to be submitted with applics.

TRADE Union Organiser, male, reqd., North of England. Initiative, good personality and public speaking ability requisite qualifics. Salary in range £250-£400 plus cost of living allowance. Applic. form on request to Asst. Gen. Secretary, The National Union of Bank Employees, 28 Old Queen St. London, S.W.1.

YOUTH leader, non-resident (male) wanted for Club, to take charge of 150/200 Boys and Girls between 14-18. Must have had good exp. and good knowl. of Jewish Affairs, also to take charge of sports ground. Sal. according to exp. and capability. Write in first instance, marking letter "Private," giving full partics., to Hon. Sec., Maccabi Assoc., London, 73 Compayne Gdns. N.W.6.

REQUIRED for small International Hostel (max. 37 people): (a) Resident Warden—Duties: general organisation, bookings and reception, Food Office returns, salary up to £200 p.a.; (b) Resident Assistant Warden. Salary up to £150 p.a. Applicants should be internationally minded. Details from Secretary, London Friendship Centre, 39 Ladbroke Grove, W.11.

Appointments Vacant—continued

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CHILDREN'S Home (British Legion Women's Section), Lancaster House, Lancaster Park, Richmond, Surrey. Wanted as soon as possible, a Group Mother to help with general work with 15 children aged 3-10 years, and to be responsible for the well-being of a family group of 4 children. Salary £100 p.a. with residence. Apply to Matron.

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L.C.C. Reqd. at Ongar Residential E.S.N. School, Chipping Ongar, Essex: a male or female Assistant Teacher (resident or non-resident). The School accommodates 168 E.S.N. boys of low I.Q. Ability to play the piano desirable. Burnham scale sal. plus two increments carried beyond the max. Residential emoluments of board, lodging, washing and medical attendance in consideration of supervisory duties outside school hrs. Applic. forms (s.a.e. necessary), from the Education Officer (S.S.5), The County Hall, S.E.1, returnable within next 2 weeks. (3952.)

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WANTED, experienced Junior School Teacher; also capable Senior Master willing to deputise Headmistress. Couple combining these activities most acceptable. Co-ed. Country Boarding School, 80 miles London. Box 215.

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Statement of Accounts,

31st December, 1947.

LIABILITIES.

	£	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts	1,237,679,861	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	10,187,114	
		1,247,866,975
Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc., for account of Customers		38,105,219
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		12,250,000

ASSETS.

Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England		108,115,414
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		48,366,552
Money at Call and Short Notice		77,592,700
Bills Discounted		206,445,186
Treasury Deposit Receipts		279,000,000
Investments (including 2,638 Shares of £1,000 each, £300 paid up, in Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation Limited)		297,088,881
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, less amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—£1,242,295 5s. 0d. Stock		3,726,886
Other Banks—(including fully paid Stock and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each, £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		5,454,669
Advances:—Customers and other Accounts	241,229,417	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	1,218,278	
		242,447,695
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